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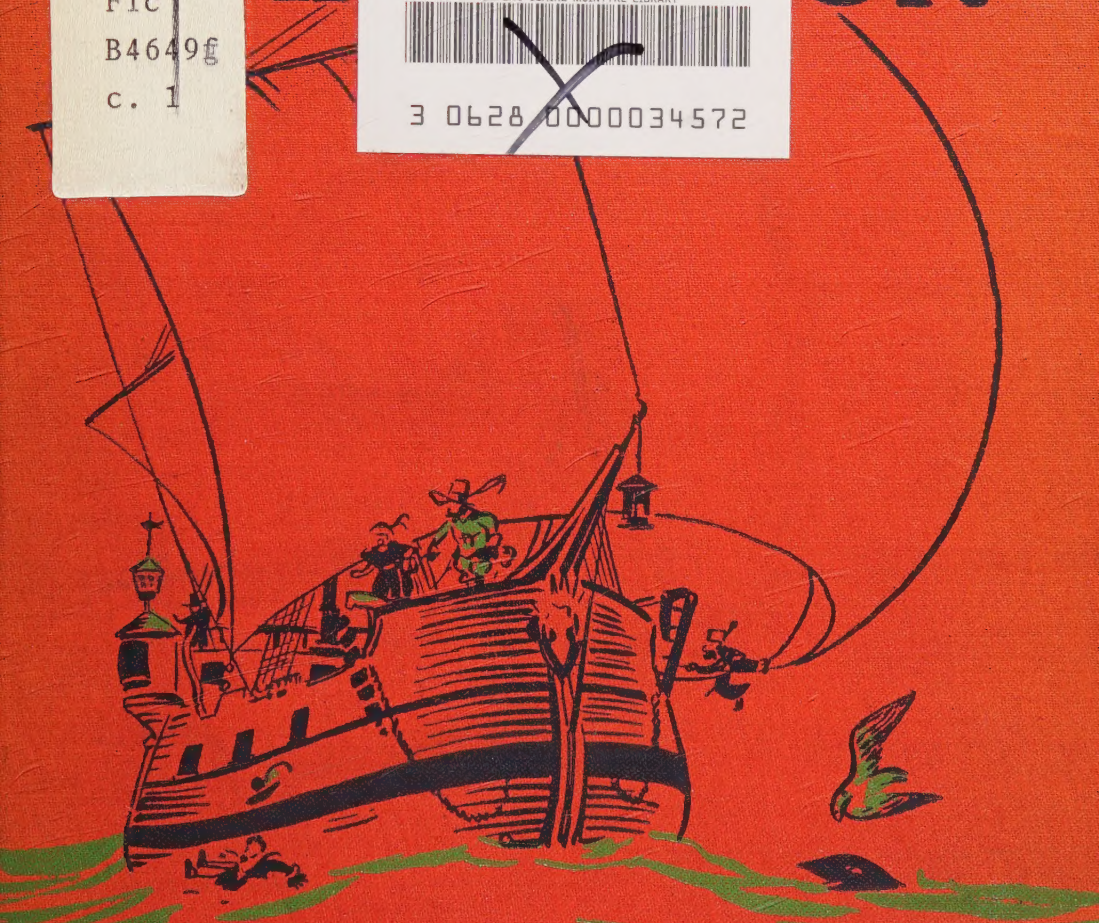

HENRY BESTON

CADMUS BOOKS

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THE FIRELIGHT FAIRY BOOK

BY HENRY BESTON

Author of *The Starlight Wonder Book*

What would you say to anyone who told you to go look for a square wheel or a glass of dry water? You would probably laugh, because you would know right away that it was a joke. Bobo was a very stupid little boy and he didn't know it was a joke, so he would go and look.

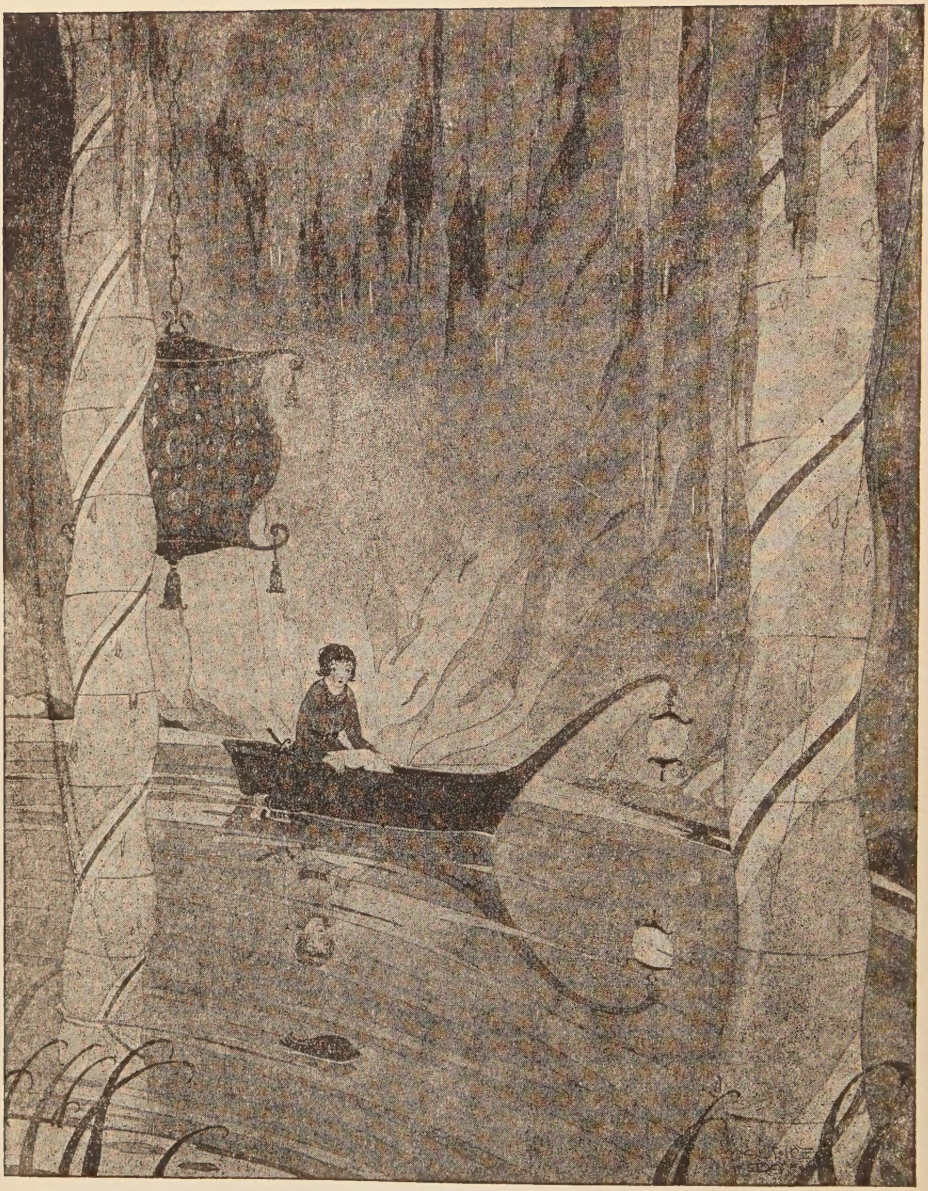
One time the princess at the castle slept half an hour later than usual in the morning. So Bobo was sent to look for the "lost half-hour". The people at the castle laughed and laughed when he started, for they thought it was a good joke on Bobo.

Bobo was gone for a long, long time . In fact, it was several years before he came back. During that time he had many adventures and found many valuable things. Did he really find the lost half-hour? You will have to decide that when you read the story.

The story of Bobo is just one of many fascinating stories in **The Firelight Fairy Book.** You will love these brand new fairy tales which you have never read in any other book.

* * *

THE FIRELIGHT FAIRY BOOK



The Prince begins his journey through the caverns.

The FIRELIGHT FAIRY BOOK

By HENRY BESTON

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
MAURICE E. DAY

This special edition is published by arrangement with the publisher of the regular edition, Little, Brown and Company.

CADMUS BOOKS

E. M. HALE AND COMPANY

EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN

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FOREWORD

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON, *September* 7, 1922

DEAR HENRY:—

"Grown-ups" arrogate entirely too much to themselves. I know this is so. I discovered it for a fact when I was not more than "knee-high to a grasshopper" myself. I knew, for example, that a certain amount of dirt on my face and hands in no way interfered with my enjoyment of my supper. The fact that my finger nails were not all they should have been had no bearing whatsoever upon the efficiency of those same fingers. Washing not only took time from other important pursuits, but also was mildly unpleasant. Nevertheless, my mother was not even open to reasonable argument on the matter. Arbitrarily, with the despotism of an early Roman Emperor, she rendered a dictum to the effect that I must wash, and soapy and submissive I had to be before I could come to the table. Again, any reasonable child can tell you that pleasure is the main object of eating; therefore, in all logic, one should eat if one feels like it at ten o'clock in the morning, or at three o'clock in the afternoon, a jar of Guava jelly, a pound of chocolates, a paper of ginger cookies, or whatever may appeal to one's æsthetic taste. This method of procedure, naturally, might necessitate recourse to the brown-wood family medicine

closet. Certain discomfort might ensue. But was not the pleasure worth it? Again my mother arbitrarily took the matter into her own hands, disagreeing with me on fundamentals. She maintained that eating was not for pleasure simply, but for nourishment. Sundry unfortunate remarks were made containing references to gluttony. The pantry was locked, and regular meals at regular periods were prescribed. Indeed, poems with dreadful morals for those who ate between meals were recited to me, endeavor being made thereby to substitute terror for inclination.

Any reasonable child will find many such parallel instances of the assumed omnipotence of "grown-ups." With this awful indictment before me, you ask me, a "grown-up," to write an introduction for the "Firelight Fairy Book," and thereby to assume the responsibility for passing judgment upon it. There is but one circumstance that makes me willing to do so. I believe that where any nice "grown-up" is concerned, if you crack the hard outside shell with which circumstances have surrounded him, beneath it you will find a child. Banking on this, I venture to say that I thoroughly enjoyed the "Firelight Fairy Book." I liked particularly the story of the poor little prince, whose sneezing had such a disastrous effect; and the lost half hour is unquestionably an accurate historical account, because no one could have described so accurately, simply from imagina-

tion, what a lost temper looked like. What makes me even more willing to advance my opinion is that I do not stand alone. My conclusions are supported by a jury of my peers, for I have given the book as a Christmas gift, not only to my own children, but to other people's children, and to one of the prominent Senators of the United States. They have universally acclaimed it, and who can question the judgment of such a jury?

Good luck to the "Firelight Fairy Book." May it, like Scrooge's laugh in the "Christmas Carol," "be the father of a long, long line of brilliant" books of a like nature for the enjoyment of all true children, whether they be still at day school, or sitting in the high places of the world.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

HENRY BESTON, ESQ.
Topsfield, Mass.

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THE QUEEN OF LANTERN LAND

Once upon a time the youngest son of a king became filled with the desire to go abroad and see the world. He got his father's permission to depart, kissed his parents good-bye, mounted his black horse, and galloped away down the high road. Soon the gray towers of the old castle in which he was born hid themselves behind him.

The Prince journeyed on, spending the days in traveling, and the nights in little wayside inns, till one day he found himself in the heart of the Adamant Mountains. The great, red granite crags of the surrounding peaks rose out of the gleaming snow like ugly fingers, and the slopes of giant glaciers sparkled in the sun like torrents of diamonds. The Prince sat down by some stunted trees whose tops had long before been broken off by an avalanche, and began to eat the bit of bread and cheese which he had

stored in his pocket. His black horse, meanwhile, ate the grass which grew here and there along the mountain path. And as the Prince sat there in the bright sun and the silence of the mountains, he became aware of a low, continuous roaring.

"There must be a waterfall near-by," said the Prince to himself. "I'll go and see it."

So, casting another look at his steed, who was contentedly browsing, the Prince climbed up the mountainside in the direction of the sound.

The Prince climbed and climbed, he went in this direction and in that, yet the sound never grew any louder or fainter. Suddenly he realized that he was hopelessly lost. The little path up which he had ridden had vanished completely, and he had not the slightest idea in which direction it lay. He called aloud, but only the mountain echoes answered mockingly.

Night came, and the Prince took shelter behind a great rock. All the next day he labored to find the path, but in vain. He grew very

hungry and cold. Every once in a while he would hear the roaring of the waterfall, which seemed to have grown louder.

Another day dawned, and another day again. The Prince was getting very weak. He knew that he was approaching the mysterious cataract, for the noise of the water was now tremendous, and heaven and earth were full of its roar. The third night came, and the full moon rose solemnly over the snow-clad summits of the lonely and mysterious mountains. Suddenly the Prince, walking blindly on, staggered through a narrow passage-way between two splintered crags, and found himself face to face with the mystery.

He stood on the snowy floor of a vast amphitheatre whose walls were the steep sides of the giant mountains. Farthest away from him, and opposite the moon, the wall of the bowl appeared as a giant black precipice, whose top seemed to reach almost to the moon-dimmed stars; and over this precipice a broad river was

endlessly pouring, shining in the night like the overflow of an ocean of molten silver. Though now very weak from lack of food, and dizzy with the roaring of the cataract, the Prince made his way to the shore of the foaming and eddying lake into which the water was falling. Great was his surprise to discover that the overflow of this lake disappeared into the earth through a long, low opening in the cliff behind the fall. Greater still was his surprise to see a strange many-colored light burning within the cave.

The Prince made his way toward the light, along a narrow beach of white sand lying between the wall of the cavern and the racing waters of the mysterious river, and found that the glow came from a magnificent lantern studded with emeralds, topazes, amethysts, and rubies, which hung by a chain from the roof of the grotto. Directly under this lantern, drawn up on the sand, lay a little boat with a lantern fastened to the bow. The Prince pushed

the boat into the river, and got into it, and the swift current seized him and hurried him away.

At first the cavern grew higher and wider; then it shrank again, and the boat, borne along with incredible speed, shot down a rocky passageway into the very heart of the earth. The passageway broadened once more, and the boat rode gently through monstrous caves whose roofs were upheld by twisted columns taller than the tallest tree. There were times when all was so still that the Prince could easily have imagined himself back in the solitude of the mountains; there were times when the foaming and roaring of the underground river grew so deafening that the Prince feared lest he might be approaching the brink of a subterranean cataract.

Many hours passed. The Prince did not know whether it was night or day. At length, while the boat was gliding through a vast hall, he fell asleep. When he awoke, he found that the boat was floating on the black, glassy surface

of an immense underground ocean. All signs of the cavern had disappeared. Far away, over the edge of this ocean, a strange, beautiful glow mounted into the starless sky of the underworld. And while the Prince was gazing at the glow, the boat swung into a new current, and was borne swiftly toward the light. In a short time the light grew so wide and bright that one would have believed that a strange, golden sun had risen. The boat passed between two giant marble pillars supporting enormous crystal globes filled with a golden fire, and the Prince found himself in the harbor of Lantern Land.

A city lay before him, a strange golden city edging the shore of a vast, semi-circular bay. Because in the centre of the earth there is neither sun nor moon, the people have to be continually burning lights; and so many and so great were the lanterns of Lantern Land that the town was as bright as day. The edge of the harbor was marked with a row of golden lanterns;

there were immense lanterns at every six paces along the streets; a lantern hung from every house; and the church-towers, instead of having bells in them, had great golden lamps which illumined everything for some distance about. Moreover, every inhabitant of Lantern Land carried a lantern with him wherever he went, the rich carrying golden lanterns set with transparent precious stones, the poor carrying lights of ordinary glass.

Soon the Prince saw a magnificent ship coming out to meet him. The prow was carved in the shape of a dragon's head, and a beautiful lantern hung from its jaws. Overcome by hunger and fatigue, the poor Prince fell insensible to the floor of his little boat. When he came to his senses again, he was lying between sheets of the whitest, most delicate linen in a great four-poster bed, in a room in the royal palace.

Thanks to his kind hosts, the Prince soon recovered his strength. When he was com-

pletely himself again, he was summoned to an audience with the Queen of Lantern Land.

The Queen, a very beautiful young woman, wearing a wonderful lantern crown, sat on an ebony throne. On each side of the throne stood a tall soldier, clad in scarlet and holding a long ebony staff surmounted by a round lantern lit by a golden flame.

The Prince dropped on his knee, and thanked the Queen for her kindness and hospitality.

"You are the first stranger to come to Lantern Land for a thousand years," said the young Queen. "If it is not asking too much from a guest, pray how did you happen to find the river of the underworld?"

So the Prince told her that he was a king's son, and described his adventures in the mountains. You may be sure the Queen was glad to hear of his royal birth, for she had fallen in love with him at first sight.

A month passed. The Prince remained a guest in the palace. All kinds of festivities

were given in his honor; there were wonderful dances, masquerades, picnics, and theatricals going on all the time. One day the Prince and the Queen, accompanied by a little group of courtiers, rode to the frontier of Lantern Land. The lovers galloped ahead of the party and reached a little hill beyond which there were no more lanterns. Ahead of them the rolling land, sweeping farther and farther away from the light, grew darker and darker, till it finally plunged into the eternal night of the underworld.

The Prince looked at the Queen, and saw that she was weeping.

"Dear love, why do you weep?" asked the Prince, who felt sad to see tears in his lady's lovely eyes.

"I weep to think that in spite of our love we must soon part forever," said the Queen.

"Part forever? Dear lady, what can you mean?" said the anxious Prince.

"A cruel fate hangs over us," replied the lady.

"Know, dear Prince, that I am promised in marriage to the Enchanter Dragondel, and that in exactly eight days, he will come here to claim my hand."

"The Enchanter Dragondel—who is he?" said the Prince.

"Alas," said the Queen, "the Enchanter Dragondel is the most powerful magician of all the underworld. He is about eight feet tall, has cruel sunken eyes that burn like dull fires, and dresses entirely in black. We met at a ball given by the King of the Goblins. Dragondel pursued me with compliments. A few days afterwards, an iron boat arrived in the port of Lantern Land, having on board a giant blue dog who is Dragondel's younger brother. This terrible animal, from whose sight the people of Lantern Land fled screaming, made his way to the palace, and dropped at my feet a jeweled casket, which he carried between his jaws. The casket contained Dragondel's request for my hand, and added that, were I to refuse him, he

would let loose a legion of ghosts and other winged spirits against the lanterns of Lantern Land. I had a vision of Lantern Land in darkness; of my poor subjects dying of fear and starvation. Rather than let this vision come true, I accepted the Enchanter. Soon I shall never see you again, for Dragondel will come and take me to his awful castle which lies on an island in the dark ocean. Nor will you ever be able to save me, for Dragondel has so bewitched the waves that a terrible whirlpool forms on the sea when a boat approaches the enchanted castle, and engulfs it."

"But I can fight Dragondel," said the Prince, like the brave youth that he was.

"That would be of little use," replied the Queen, "for you would be changed into a stone the instant you crossed swords with him. To-morrow, the blue dog arrives to remind me of my obligation, and to carry back to the island some of the palace servants who are to make Dragondel's castle ready for my coming."

The other members of the party now rode up, and the Queen dabbed her eyes with her handkerchief, and pretended not to have been crying. The Prince and the Queen felt very unhappy as they rode home.

On the next day, sure enough, the iron boat arrived, and the blue dog, who was as large as a lion, went to the Queen's palace, and bade her make ready for the coming wedding. A dozen of the Queen's servants were then ordered to go with the blue dog to Dragondel's castle. Among these servants, disguised as a kitchen lad, was the Prince; for he had determined to see if there was not some way in which the young Queen could be rescued from the wicked magician.

The boat neared the island, but no terrible whirlpool formed in the enchanted sea. At last the boat reached Dragondel's castle. It stood on the top of a high lonely rock against whose steep sides the waves of the underground ocean were forever foaming and breaking, and

it was half in ruins and was very poorly lighted.

The Prince took his place in the kitchen, and sought for an opportunity to prevent the marriage of Dragondel and the Queen.

For four days of the precious week, however, the poor Prince was kept so busy baking and making pastries for the coming of the bride that he did not have an instant to ask questions or do anything else.

In the morning hours of the fifth day there was a terrible moaning and roaring outside, and the cooks rushed to the kitchen windows. An unhappy fishing boat had been swept by the wind too near Dragondel's castle, the enchanted whirlpool had formed, and caught the boat in its awful circle. Now it went slowly round the outer edge, now, going faster and faster, it slid down the side of the awful funnel, and finally it vanished. An instant later, the whirlpool had disappeared, leaving the sea roaring and foaming.

The Prince shuddered.

"Well you may shudder," said the chief cook, "for such would have been your fate if our master's brother had not carried with him the talisman which rules the whirlpool."

"Talisman? What talisman?" said the Prince affecting stupidity.

"Why the little golden hand, you fool," said the chief cook.

"My! it must be a great big hand to be able to quiet that whirlpool," said the Prince.

"Big indeed, you ninny!" growled the cook. "Why, the magic hand is only as big as a baby's hand. I've seen it many times. The master carries it in his pocket, and puts it under his pillow while he sleeps."

So, later on, when his work was done, and everybody had gone to bed, the Prince, in the hope of stealing the talisman, tried to make his way to Dragondel's bedchamber. But when he reached the foot of the stairs which led to the Enchanter's room, he found it guarded by two black panthers which stared at him with

insolent yellow eyes and switched their long tails. The Prince went outdoors, to see if there was any hope of climbing to the room along the outer wall, and found that the windows of Dragondel's chamber overlooked a cliff falling thousands of feet sheer to the dark sea. Far, far away, the Prince saw the glow of Lantern Land. Only a short time remained to him in which to save his beloved lady of the lanterns.

As he wandered about, very sick at heart, he saw a little black cat running madly back and forth along the edge of a steep cliff from one of whose crevices came a persistent, unhappy mewing. The poor cat was a mother-cat, and was trying to rescue a kitten of hers that had fallen down between the rocks. At great risk of being dashed to pieces himself, the brave Prince climbed down the precipice, rescued the kitten, and gave it back to its anxious mother.

"Thank you, brave youth," said the old cat. "May it some day be within my power to help you as you have helped me."

"You can help me this very moment," said the Prince. And he told the cat who he was, why he had come to the castle, and of his desire to get possession of the talisman.

"I will help you get the talisman," said the cat. "The panthers will let me pass, for they are cousins of mine. But you must make another little golden hand to take the place of the one I shall steal; for if Dragondel misses the golden hand, he will summon his demons to find it, and we shall both lose our lives. Go now to the kitchen, carve a small hand with the fingers close together and the thumb lying close to the fingers, gild it over with the gold dust you have had given you for the pastry icings, and bring it to me to-morrow night at this very hour."

So the Prince worked the rest of the night carving and gilding the little golden hand, and on the next night he gave it to the cat. The cat took it in her mouth as she would have a mouse, walked coolly by the panthers, and

entered Dragondel's room. She had just succeeded in getting the true hand out from under the magician's pillow when Dragondel woke up. The cat was clever enough to pretend to be engaged in a mouse-hunt, so the Enchanter paid no attention to her and fell asleep once more. When the cat, however, got under Dragondel's couch again, the two hands lay side by side and she could not remember just which one was the talisman and which one the false hand. So because she had to act quickly, she put one of the hands under the pillow, brought the other to the Prince and told him her story. But so well matched were the little hands, that even the Prince was far from certain that he had not got his own hand back again.

And now came the seventh day, the day on which Dragondel, the blue dog, and all the wicked Enchanter's friends were to sail to Lantern Land for the marriage ceremony. The iron ship, made gay with a thousand small scarlet lanterns, stood ready to carry them

over. The Enchanter and his company got in, and the vessel left the island.

The Prince stood watching the ship from the top of the cliffs. What anxiety was in his heart! If Dragondel still possessed the true talisman, he would cross the whirlpool safely, and marry the beautiful Queen of Lantern Land.

The vessel sped on. It was now at some distance from the island.

"All is lost," thought the Prince with a sinking heart; "Dragondel has the true talisman." And in his bitterness he was about to throw the little golden hand which lay in his pocket down into the sea.

Suddenly the air became filled with a terrible moaning; the sea became troubled; the whirlpool awoke. And the Prince saw the red lights of the Enchanter's ship whirled round and round, faster and faster, till they disappeared forever in the waters of the sunless sea.

As for the Prince, he soon found another boat,

and taking with him the talisman, his fellow servants, and the black cat and her kittens, he returned to Lantern Land, married the Queen, and lived happily ever after.

THE ADVENTURES OF FLORIAN

Once upon a time there lived in an old and ruinous house by the shore of the wild sea, a widowed nobleman and his only child, a daughter named Isabella. They were very poor in spite of their high birth, so poor that one by one the fields and woods of their little domain

had been sold in order to buy the bare necessities of life. Knowing that his death would leave Isabella quite alone in the world and practically penniless, her father brought her up more like a boy than a girl; she could ride a horse as gracefully as an Amazon, she could swim like a born mermaid, and even outdo her father in his favorite sport of fencing. Yet so sweet was the gentle nature which the girl had inherited from her mother, that this strange upbringing never spoiled her in the least.

Late one October evening, when the fierce gusts of wind from the sea shook the old house to its very foundation and set the ragged tapestries swaying on the walls, Isabella's father died, leaving her only the ruinous house, a handful of copper pence, and a single golden florin. The sum of money was enough to keep body and soul together for a few weeks, but what was Isabella to do when the little pittance was gone? Her father had once counseled her to go to the King and ask for his protection;

but the King's castle was hundreds of miles distant, and Isabella shrank from begging on the highway.

At last the brave girl resolved to make her own way in the world. Taking the golden florin with her, she went to a neighboring town, and purchased a suit of clothes such as pages and squires wear who are in the service of noblemen. She then caused her black hair to be cut short, boy-fashion, put on the boy's clothes she had purchased, and went into the market-place to see if she could not find a situation in the service of some great family.

Now, it was the custom in those days for masters and servants to meet by a fountain in the market-place, the masters who were in need of servants standing on one side of the fountain, the servants who were in search of masters on the other.

When Isabella came into the market-place, there was no one standing on the masters' side of the fountain, but on the other side, ready

for the first master who should appear, was a little group of noisy and impudent squires and pages. Isabella, or, as she now called herself, Florian, strode boldly over and joined this group, her heart beating high with the thrill of the great adventure.

Suddenly a black knight, mounted on a black horse and leading another horse by the bridle, clattered over the cobble-stones of the square, and taking his place by the fountain, called on the pages to come to him. In spite of the horseman's summons, however, the pages paid no attention to him at all. Curious to know the reason of this disdain, Florian questioned a fellow page, and was told that the knight was no other than the Enchanter of the Black Rock, and that no page or squire would take service with him because his castle was haunted by goblins, ghosts, and all manner of terrifying spirits.

Now, Florian was no coward, and, as the saying is, beggars cannot be choosers. So, much

to the astonishment of the pages, Florian walked over to the Enchanter, who sat fuming with anger and impatience, and offered to go with him. The Knight bade Florian mount the horse which he was holding; and amid the cat-calls and hooting of the pages, master and boy galloped away.

All day long they rode, and when it was near the end of the afternoon Florian found himself at the edge of a wild and desolate moor. Within the great circle of the horizon, under the pale sky, not a tree, not a house, not a shepherd's hut even was to be seen—nothing but the great barren waste rolling, rising and falling to the very edge of the world. Lower and lower sank the sun; it grew cold, and a blue mist fell. Twilight came, a green, mysterious twilight.

Suddenly, from a hillock of the moor, Florian beheld afar the enchanted dwelling. A great sunken marsh lay before him, beginning at the foot of the little hill and stretching away, league after league, till its farther shore was

hidden in the gathering darkness. The autumn wind stirred the dead sedges at its brim, and though the dying twilight was still gleaming in the sky, the great bog had caught little of its glow, and lay full of coiling blue mists, pale quagmires, and islands of mysterious darkness. A dreadful moaning cry, uttered by some demon of the moor, sounded through the mist, chilling the blood in Florian's veins; and as if in answer to the cry, thousands upon thousands of will-o'-the-wisps appeared, darting and dancing. In the very heart of this terrible marsh a great black rock uprose, and on this rock, its turrets and battlements outlined against the burning face of the moon, stood the castle. Ghostly lights, now green, now blue, flickered in its windows.

The Enchanter reined up his horse at the brink of the mire, and cried,—

"List! List!
Will-o'-the-Wisp,
Lend me your light."

Scarcely had the last word fallen from the Enchanter's mouth, when the dancing witch-fires hurried toward him from all sides of the marsh. Soon a pale road leading across the bog to the castle stood revealed, an enchanted road which melted away behind the riders as smoke melts into the winter air. To the very gates of his castle did the ghost-fires accompany the Enchanter; then, rising swiftly high into the air, they fled like startled birds, in every direction.

Doors opened of their own will, strange goblins and ghostly creatures passed, and bright, whirling globes of fire fled hissing across the castle courtyard. Just as they were about to enter the castle itself, the Enchanter turned, and fastened his burning eyes on Florian.

"Boy," said he, "let nothing that you hear or see make you afraid. Be assured that no power or spirit can harm you. There is only one demon in the world whose power is greater than mine, and that is Fear himself. Be brave, keep the doors of your heart locked against

Fear; be faithful, and you shall never have cause to regret your coming."

So Florian, who was by nature brave, felt ashamed of having allowed the demon Fear to knock at the door of his heart, and resolved never to let his courage fail, no matter what might happen. And true to this resolve the lad remained during the years he spent in the service of the Enchanter. At first, to be sure, he had to struggle to conquer his fear of some of the goblins; but as time passed and no ghost or goblin ever ventured to annoy him, he grew accustomed to their presences and ended by paying no more attention to them than he paid to the great ravens who flew croaking over the mire. So faithful and courageous was the little page that, when his year was up, the Enchanter begged him to remain yet another year, promising him rich rewards if he stayed. When this second year was up, however, Florian felt a longing to see the world again, and told the Enchanter that he must be going.

"Very well," said the Enchanter, who respected the courage of the brave page, "thou shalt do as thou desirest. Thou art a brave and faithful lad. Here is a purse of gold for thy wages, and here are three gifts to reward thy courage and good-will." He opened a copper casket and took forth a little golden bird with outstretched wings hanging from a fine golden chain, a golden key, and a scarlet sphere marked with a band of white. "This little bird," continued the Enchanter, "will protect you from the spells of any sorcerer whose power is less than mine, and will sing when you fare into hidden danger; this key will open every door in the world; and should you ever lose your way, you have but to put this sphere on the ground, and it will roll home of its own accord. Moreover, if you are ever yourself in deadly peril, call upon me, and I will come and help you."

So Florian thanked the Enchanter, and taking his gifts, went back into the world again.

But so gentle and kind was he that he soon gave away to the unfortunate all the gold he had earned, and was forced to go in search of another situation. At length he entered the service of the King and Queen of the Twelve Towers.

This royal couple, who were renowned in Fairyland as much for their goodness and generosity as for their wealth and magnificence, had but one son, Prince Florizel. No braver or more gallant prince ever drew breath. He had driven the dragon of the blue cavern out of his father's kingdom; he had fought three wicked ogres one after the other, and finished each one; he had delivered the diamond castle of a terrible spell which lay upon it.

When Florian entered the service of the King and Queen, these excellent parents were sending their son on a visit to his uncle, the Emperor of the Plain, and Florian was ordered to join the gay company of lords and ladies, knights and soldiers, who were to make the journey.

According to the gossip of the company, Prince Florizel was being sent to his uncle's in the hope that he would fall in love with his uncle's ward, the beautiful Princess Rosamond.

Now in some way or other, after the company had been a few days on the road, Prince Florizel, who watched over the company as carefully as a good captain does over his soldiers, became aware of the bravery, trustworthiness, and modest bearing of Florian, the little page, and promoted him to be his own personal squire. Alas! no sooner had he been advanced, than Florian the little page, though remaining outwardly a page, became at heart the runaway girl, Isabella. Though she fought as hard as she could against her own heart, it was of little use, and she knew herself to be deeply in love with the gallant Florizel. Yet she suffered no word or sign of her affection to escape her, for Prince Florizel thought her only a little page, and to speak would be to betray the secret she had so long and successfully guarded.

One morning, as the cavalcade was riding through a charming country, Florian, for so we must still continue to call Isabella, was following close behind his master, when the Prince caught sight of a wonderful scarlet flower, something like a scarlet lily, blooming by the roadside. At the same moment, the little golden bird that Florian wore round his neck sang a few clear notes as if it were alive.

"What a pretty flower!" said the Prince. "I must have it."

And he was about to dismount and pick the flower, when Florian spurred on ahead of him, grasped the enchanted flower, and tossed it into a ditch.

"Fie, what a naughty page!" cried the lords and ladies.

The company rode on a few miles more, and suddenly the Prince caught sight of a beautiful jeweled dagger lying in the highway. At the same moment the little golden bird sang a few clear notes of warning.

"What a fine dagger!" cried the Prince, "I must have it."

And he was about to dismount and pick up the dagger, when Florian spurred on ahead of him, seized the dagger, and tossed it into a ditch.

"Fie, what a naughty page!" cried the lords and ladies.

The company now rode on for a few miles more, and the Prince saw by the roadside a beautiful enchanted garden. Birds of many colors sang in the branches of the trees, fountains sparkled and danced in the sunlight, and the sweetest of music was heard. At the same moment the golden bird sang louder and longer than ever.

"What a beautiful garden!" cried the Prince. "Let us ride in and look about."

So Florian hurried to the Prince's side, and implored him not to enter, saying that the garden was enchanted and that some harm would certainly befall him.

At this, all the lords and ladies, who were a little jealous, perhaps, that a page should know more than they, laughed at poor Florian, and even Florizel smiled at him and said, "All that is only fancy, little Florian," and dashed in through the garden gate. For a minute or so nothing happened, and the first to enter mocked at Florian again; but when the whole company had entered the garden, there was a clap of thunder, and everybody except the Prince and Florian, who was protected by the Enchanter's charm, was turned into stone. The echoes of the thunder had hardly ceased rolling when two frightful demons with lions' heads rushed towards them through the garden, seized the Prince, and hurried him away. Florian was left alone in the garden. Night was fast approaching.

Now, the owner of the enchanted garden was a witch, who had a daughter so frightfully ugly that even her mother's powerful magic could not make her beautiful. In spite of her

ugliness, however, the witch's daughter considered herself quite beautiful, and was always importuning her mother to invite to the castle princes whom she considered worthy of her hand. So the old witch gave wonderful dances and parties, to which all the eligible young kings and princes of the neighborhood were invited; but just as soon as the witch's daughter appeared with a horrid smirk on her ugly face, the young men were sure to make their excuses and ride away.

At length the old witch, who had just had a severe tongue-lashing from her daughter for not punishing the Prince of Zagabondiga after that prince had failed to ask her for a dance, could endure her daughter's scolding no longer, and resolved to catch the first prince who came past her garden, and force him, willy nilly, to accept her ugly daughter. Into her trap poor Florizel had walked, and the witch, hoping to bend him to her will by terrifying him, had thrown him into a deep dungeon. The ugly

daughter had immediately peeked through the key-hole of the prison, and fallen in love with Florizel at first sight.

The witch was just considering what to do next, when her lion-headed servitors informed her that one of the company had resisted her enchantment, and was wandering about the garden. So the witch put on her cloak of invisibility, and going down to the garden, found poor Florian wandering disconsolately under the trees. She saw at once that it was the little golden bird which had protected him from her magic; and being afraid of the charm and yet unable to work the poor lad any harm while the bird was in his possession, she decided to rid herself of Florian by transporting her castle, gardens and all, over to the other side of the world. So she uttered a spell, and everything disappeared.

When Florian woke the next morning, and found that the castle was gone, his heart sank. Nevertheless, he did not despair, but taking

from his pocket the little scarlet ball which his master the Enchanter had given him, he put it on the ground, and bade it guide him back to the Enchanted Garden.

The little ball immediately began rolling ahead at Florian's own pace; at night it glowed with a scarlet fire. Day after day, month after month, the scarlet ball rolled on; it led Florian over hill and down dale, through the land of the men who have only one eye, through the country of the dwarfs, and the valley of the talking trees, never stopping till it reached the gate of the witch's garden.

A year, meanwhile, had gone by, and during that year the witch had done everything she could to induce Prince Florizel to accept her ugly daughter. First she had tried frightening him, then she had tried to win him by giving splendid fêtes, then she had tried terrifying him again; but as the Prince was neither to be terrified nor cajoled, she came to her wits' end. Finally she told the Prince that, if he were not

willing to accept her daughter in marriage on the very next day, she would turn him into a hare and set her dogs upon him. The Prince made no answer to her terrible threat, and the witch went ahead and made preparation for the grandest of weddings. On that night, Florian arrived at the garden.

When it was very late, and the moon, which was a quarter full, had disappeared behind a bank of clouds, Florian crept unobserved to the door of Florizel's prison; for the witch had locked him up so securely that she had not taken the trouble to find a watchman. Alas! the poor Prince lay at the top of a high tower, and twenty different doors, each one opened by a different key, stood between him and the ground.

But Florian was not to be daunted, and drawing from his bosom the key which the Enchanter had given him, he opened one door after the other till he arrived in the cell occupied by the Prince.

The poor Prince lay chained on a bed of straw, trying to read a book by the light of a single candle. He was very unhappy, for he had resolved to let himself be torn in pieces rather than marry the ugly witch maiden. You may be sure he was glad to see Florian.

"Dear Florian," said the unhappy Prince, "if I had only obeyed your counsel, all would have been well." And he begged Florian to tell him where he had been all the long year.

So Florian told the Prince of his adventures.

Now, the chains which the Prince wore were riveted cruelly upon him, and since there was no lock to them, the magic key was of no avail. At length, however, Florizel managed to work them off; but in doing so, he injured his foot, and found to his dismay that he could only limp along.

Little by little the freshened air and the stir of leaves began to foretell the coming of the dawn. Finally, just as the dawn-star began to pale, Florizel and Florian hurried out of the

prison through the twenty doors, and fled to the highroad.

But they had traveled only a few miles, when the wicked witch discovered Florizel's flight, and, dreadfully enraged, commanded that her dragon car be got ready in order that she might go in pursuit of him. So the car was brought forth, and into it the witch leaped, and mounted into the sky. Hearing the hissing and roaring of the dragons in the air, Florian and Florizel tried to hide under some trees; but the witch instantly saw them, and pronounced a spell to turn them into hares. But though the hate of the witch was quick, the woman's heart of Isabella was quicker, and sacrificing herself for the man she loved, she threw the chain and the golden bird over the Prince's head. An instant later she had turned into a little gray hare crouching at Florizel's feet. At the same moment, the cruel witch, who had arrived at her castle, let loose her pack of fierce hunting dogs, who soon took up the

trail of the hare and came bounding toward her in full cry.

The poor Prince picked up the hare and hobbled forward as fast as he could go, forgetting the dreadful pain it caused him; but the dogs were running a hundred times faster than he. Nearer and nearer came the pack, their red tongues lolling from their black throats. By good fortune, just as the leader of the pack was not more than fifty feet away, Isabella had wit enough to remember the promise which the Enchanter had made her, and called upon him. Immediately a strong glass wall, as high as a castle tower, shot up from the ground behind Isabella and the Prince; and the pack, hurrying forward, found themselves baulked of their prey. Snarling and yelling, they threw themselves against the magic wall; but in vain.

In another instant, the Enchanter himself stood before them, and touching the hare with his wand, restored Isabella to her human form. She still wore the garments of Florian, how-

ever, and the Prince still thought her a boy.

Suddenly a shadow fell on the ground near them, and looking up, all beheld the wicked witch and her ugly daughter, who had ridden out in the dragon car to enjoy Florizel's cruel death. The Enchanter immediately caused the dragon car to vanish, and the witch and her daughter fell tumbling through the air into a pond, and were changed into ugly little fishes. Then the Enchanter carried Florizel and Florian back to the witch's castle, where they found the tables spread and the dinner being prepared which was to celebrate the wedding of Florizel and the witch's daughter. Last of all, he released Florizel's company from the witch's spell.

Now, one of the ladies, when she heard how the witch had tried to match Florizel with her daughter, and saw the preparations for the wedding, told the Prince that it was a pity that the Princess Rosamond were not at hand, so that there might be a wedding after all.

"A wedding? No," said Florizel, "not till I have found a wife who shall have proved herself as faithful and true as little Florian."

"She is already here," said the Enchanter. And he touched Florian with his wand.

Immediately there was a flash of flame, and out of it, Florian no longer, but her own self, appeared Isabella. Her hair had grown long again, and the Enchanter had clad her in the most magnificent of gowns. Never was there a lovelier girl to be seen on earth. You may be sure that the Prince stepped forward, took her by the hand, and claimed her for his bride.

Soon the parents of Florizel, who had been summoned by the Enchanter, arrived, and there was a wedding after all. When the merry-making was over, the Enchanter went back to his castle on the Black Rock, while Florizel and Isabella returned to their own country, and lived there happily to a good old age.

THE SELLER OF DREAMS

Once upon a time a mother called her only son into the kitchen, gave him a basket of fine, fresh eggs, and bade him carry them to his Aunt Jane, who lived a few miles down the valley. The son, a lively lad about twelve years of age, obeyed his mother with joy, and clapping his little green hat on his head, stepped forth into the road. It was a beautiful clear morning in the spring, and the earth, released from the icy chains of winter, was rejoicing in her freedom and the return of the sun. A few birds, just back from the southland, rocked on twigs swollen with bursting buds, a thousand rills flowing from everywhere and in every direction sparkled and sang, and the air was sweet with the odor of ploughed fields.

The boy, whose name was Peter, walked along whistling. Suddenly he saw a spot on the road shining as dazzlingly as if a bit of the sun itself

had fallen to the earth. "A bit of glass," thought Peter. But it was not a bit of glass after all, but a fine golden florin which must have dropped from somebody's purse.

Peter stooped, picked up the gold piece, put it in his pocket, and walked off whistling louder than ever. In a little while he came to a place where the road wound down a little hill, and Peter saw, trudging up this hill, a very strange-looking old man. He was a very old man; his face was puckered up into a thousand wrinkles like the skin of a shrunken apple, and he had long, snow-white hair and a white beard which reached almost to his waist. Moreover, he was strangely dressed in a robe of cherry scarlet, and wore golden shoes. From a kind of belt hung two horns on silver chains, one an ordinary cow's horn, the other a beautiful horn carved of the whitest ivory, and decorated with little figures of men and animals.

"Dreams to sell! Dreams to sell!" called out the old man as soon as he caught sight of

Peter. "Don't you want to buy a dream, young man?"

"What kind of dreams have you?" asked Peter.

"Good, bad, true, false—all kinds," replied the seller of dreams. "I have even a few thrilling nightmares. Dreams to sell! Dreams to sell!"

"How much does a dream cost?" asked Peter.

"A golden florin," answered the merchant.

"I 'll have one, please," said Peter; and he handed over the florin he had found.

The old man took a kind of wonderful sugar-plum out of the ivory horn, and gave it to Peter to eat.

"You will have the dream next time you sleep," said he, and trudged on.

So Peter continued his journey, stopping every once in a while to look back at the strange old man, who was slowly climbing the hill. At length Peter came to a little quiet grove of pines, and there he sat down on a big stone

and ate the luncheon which his mother had prepared for him. The sun was high in the heavens; it was close on to high noon. Now, as Peter was contentedly munching his bread and cheese, he heard, at first far away, then quite near at hand, the clear notes of a coachman's horn. The notes of the second call died away in a great pattering of hoofs and tinkling of little bells, and suddenly, arriving in a great swirl of yellow dust, came a magnificent coach drawn by twelve white horses. A lady, very richly dressed and wearing many sparkling diamonds, sat within the coach. To Peter's astonishment, the lady was his Aunt Jane.

The coach stopped with a great jingling of the twelve harnesses, and Aunt Jane leaned out of the window, and said to Peter, "What are you doing here, child?"

"I was on my way to your cottage with a basket of fine fresh eggs," answered Peter.

"Well, it 's fortunate I found you," said Aunt Jane, "for I have given up living in the cot-

tage, and have now got a castle of my own. Jump in, Peter, and don't forget your basket."

So Peter climbed into the coach, closed the door behind him, and was driven away. The coach went over hill and down dale; it went through strange forests from whose branches green parrots whooped and shrieked; it rolled through valleys in strange shining mountains. Peter stole a look at Aunt Jane and saw that she was wearing a crown.

"Are you a queen, Aunt Jane?" he asked.

"Indeed, I am," replied his aunt. "You see, Peter, two days ago, while I was looking for my white cow who had strayed away, I came upon the magnificent castle to which we are now going. It has four beautiful towers, and a door set with diamonds.

"'Whose castle is this?' I said to the lodge-keeper.

"'It 's nobody's, marm,' said he.

"'What,' said I; 'do you mean to say that nobody owns this fine castle?'

"'That's just what I mean to say, marm,' answered he; 'the castle belongs to any one who wants it.'

"So into the castle I walked, and I did n't go out, you may be sure, till I had been into every room that I could find. Then I put on these clothes and these diamonds, which I found in a cupboard, and went down and told the servants I intended to be queen. You see, Peter dear, there 's nothing that a woman of determination and energy can't accomplish."

The coach rolled on, and soon Peter caught sight of Aunt Jane's castle. It was rather large, and had an enormous round tower at each corner—a thing which brought to Peter's mind the picture of an elephant lying on its back. Peter and Aunt Jane, accompanied by a train of servants dressed in blue-and-buff livery, walked into the castle through the diamond-studded door.

"Do you think you could eat a little more of something?" said Aunt Jane, taking off her

white-kid gloves; "because if you can I 'll have a place set for you at the luncheon table."

And Peter, who like all boys, could eat a little more anywhere and at any time, readily answered, "Yes."

So Peter and Aunt Jane sat down to a wonderful little table covered with a snow-white cloth.

"Draw your chair nearer, Peter dear," said Aunt Jane.

"I can't" said Peter, "it's stuck to the floor."

And so it was; the chair was stuck to the floor, and no amount of pushing or pulling could budge it.

"That 's odd," said Aunt Jane; "but never mind, I'll push the table over to the chair."

But like the chair, the table refused to budge. Peter then tried to slide his plate of soup closer to him, but the plate, which the servant had placed on the cloth but an instant before, had evidently frozen to the table in some extra-

ordinary manner and could not be moved an inch. The soup in the plate, however, was not fastened to the dish, nor were the wonderful strawberry-cakes and the delicious ices with which the dinner closed.

"You don't suppose this castle is enchanted, do you, Aunt Jane?" asked Peter.

"Not a bit of it," replied Aunt Jane. "And even if it were," she continued recklessly, "I should n't mind, for there 's nothing that a woman of determination and energy can't accomplish." There was a pause, and then Aunt Jane added, "I am going to have some guests to dinner this evening, so run round and amuse yourself as well as you can. There's ever so much to see in the castle, and in the garden there 's a pond with swans in it."

Attended by her servants, Aunt Jane majestically walked away. Peter spent the afternoon exploring the castle. He went through room after room; he scurried through the attics like a mouse, and was even lost for a while in

the cellars. And everywhere he went, he found everything immovable. The beds, tables, and chairs could neither be moved about nor lifted up, and even the clocks and vases were mysteriously fastened to their places on the shelves.

The night came on. Coach after coach rolled up to the diamond door, which sparkled in the moonlight. When the guests had all arrived, a silver trumpet sounded, and Aunt Jane, dressed in a wonderful gown of flowering brocade edged with pearls, came solemnly down the great stairway of the castle hall. Two little black boys, dressed in oriental costume and wearing turbans, held up her gorgeous train, and she looked very grand indeed. Peter, to his great surprise, found himself dressed in a wonderful suit of plum-colored velvet.

"Welcome, my friends," said Queen Jane, who had opened a wonderful ostrich-feather fan. "Are we not fortunate in having so beautiful a night for our dinner?"

And the Queen, giving her arm to a splendid personage in the uniform of an officer of the King's dragoons, led the way to the banquet-hall.

The wonderful party, all silks and satins, and gleaming with jewels, swept like a peacock's tail behind her. Soon dinner was over, and the guests began to stray by twos and threes to the ballroom. Aunt Jane and the soldier led off the grand march; then came wonderful, stately minuets, quadrilles, and sweet old-fashioned waltzes. The merriment was at its height when somebody ran heavily up the great stairs leading to the ballroom, and the guests, turning round to see whence came the clatter, saw standing in the doorway a strange old man dressed in a robe of cherry scarlet and wearing golden shoes. It was the seller of dreams. His white hair was disheveled, his robe was awry, and there was dust on his golden shoes.

"Foolish people!" screamed the old seller of

dreams, his voice rising to a shriek, "Run for your lives! This castle lies under a terrible enchantment; in a few minutes it will turn upside-down. Have you not seen that everything is fastened to the floor? Run for your lives!"

Immediately there was a great babble of voices, some shrieks, and more confusion, and the guests ran pell-mell down the great stairs and out the castle door. To Peter's dismay, Aunt Jane was not among them. So into the castle he rushed again, calling at the top of his voice, "Aunt Jane! Aunt Jane!" He ran through the brilliantly lit and deserted ballroom; he saw himself running in the great mirrors of the gallery. "Aunt Jane!" he cried; but no Aunt Jane replied.

Peter rushed up the stairs leading to the castle tower, and emerged upon the balcony. He saw the black shadow of the castle thrown upon the grass far below by the full moon; he saw the great forest, so bright above and so dark

and mysterious below, and the long snow-clad range of the Adamant Mountains. Suddenly a voice, louder than the voice of any human being, a voice deep, ringing, and solemn as the sound of a great bell, cried,—

"'T is time!"

Immediately everything became as black as ink, people shrieked, the enchanted castle rolled like a ship at sea, and leaning far to one side, *began to turn upside-down*. Peter felt the floor of the balcony tip beneath him; he tried to catch hold of something, but could find nothing; suddenly, with a scream, he fell. He was falling, falling, falling, falling, falling.

When Peter came to himself, instead of its being night, it was still noonday, and he was sitting on the same stone in the same quiet roadside grove from which he had caught sight of his Aunt Jane in her wonderful coach. A blue jay screamed at him from overhead. For Aunt Jane, the coach, and the enchanted castle

"How much does a dream cost?" asked Peter.
"A golden florin," answered the Seller of Dreams.

had been only a dream. Peter, you see, had fallen asleep under the pines, and while he slept, he had dreamed the dream he purchased from the seller of dreams.

Very glad to be still alive, Peter rubbed his eyes, took up his basket of eggs, and went down the road whistling.

THE TREASURE CASTLE

Once upon a time a hunter was roaming through the wildwood when he heard a voice crying piteously for aid. Following the sound, the hunter plunged ahead, and discovered a dwarf caught in a pit which had been dug to trap wild animals.

After the hunter had rescued the dwarf from

his prison, the little man said to him: "Go ten leagues to the north till you arrive at a gigantic pine; then turn to the east, and go ten leagues more till you come to a black castle. Enter the castle without fear, and you will discover a round room in which stands a round ebony table laden with gold and jewels. Help yourself to the treasure, and return home at once. And do not—now mark me well—go up into the turret of the castle; for if you do, evil will come of it."

So the hunter thanked the dwarf, and after making sure that he had plenty of bread and cheese in his knapsack, hurried northwards as fast as his legs could carry him. Through bramble and brier, through valley and wooded dale went he, and at dusk he came to a gigantic pine standing solitary in a rocky field. Wearied with his long journey, the hunter lay down beneath the pine and slept.

When it was dawn he woke refreshed, and turning his eyes toward the level rays of the

rising sun, began his journey to the east. Presently he reached a height in the forest, and from this height, he saw, not very far away, a black turret rising over the ocean of bright leaves. At high noon he arrived at the castle. It was ruinous and quite deserted; grass grew in the courtyard and between the bricks of the terrace, and the oaken door was as soft and rotten as a log that has long been buried in mire.

Entering the castle, the hunter soon discovered the round room. A table laden with wonderful treasures stood in the centre of the chamber, directly under a shower of sunlight pouring through a half-ruined window in the mildewed wall. How the diamonds and precious stones sparkled and gleamed!

Now, while the hunter was filling his pockets, the flash of a jewel lying on the floor happened to catch his eye, and looking down, he saw that a kind of trail of jewels lay along the floor leading out of the room. Following the scattered gems,—which had the appearance of having

been spilled from some treasure-casket heaped too high,— the hunter came to a low door, and opening this door, he discovered a flight of stone steps leading to the turret. The steps were strewn carelessly with the finest emeralds, topazes, beryls, moonstones, rubies, and crystal diamonds.

Remembering the counsel of his friend the dwarf, however, the hunter did not go up the stairs, but hurried home with his treasure.

When the hunter returned to his country, the wonderful treasures which he had taken from the castle in the wood made him a very rich man, and in a short time the news of his prosperity came to the ears of the King. This King was the wickedest of rogues, and his two best friends, the Chamberlain and the Chancellor, were every bit as unscrupulous as he. They oppressed the people with taxes, they stole from the poor, they robbed the churches; indeed there was no injustice which they were not ready to commit. So, when the Chamberlain heard

of the hunter's wealth, he—being a direct, straightforward rascal—declared that the simplest thing to do would be to kill the hunter and take his money.

The Chancellor, who was somewhat more cunning and worldly, declared that it would be better to throw the hunter into a foul, dark dungeon till he was ready to buy his freedom with all his wealth.

The King, who was the wickedest and wisest of the precious three, declared that the best thing to do was to find out whence the hunter had got his treasure, so that, if there happened to be any left, they could go and get it. Then of course, they could kill the hunter and take his treasure too.

Thus it came to pass that by a royal order the hunter was thrown into a horrible prison, and told that his only hope of release lay in revealing the origin of his riches. So, after he had been slowly starved and cruelly beaten, he told of the treasure castle in the wood.

On the following morning, the King, the Chamberlain, and the Chancellor, taking with them some strong linen bags and some pack-mules, rode forth in quest of the treasure. Great was their joy when they found the treasure castle and the treasure room just as the hunter had described. The Chancellor poured the shining gems through his claw-like fingers, and the King and the Chamberlain threw their arms around each others' shoulders and danced a jig as well as their age and dignity would permit. The first fine careless rapture over, they began pouring the treasure into the linen sacks they had brought with them, and these, filled to the brim, they carried to the castle door.

Soon not the tiniest gem was left on the table. Suddenly the Chamberlain happened to catch sight of the gems strewn along the floor.

"See, see!" he cried, his voice shrill and greedy. "There is yet more to be had!"

So the three rogues got down on their hands

and knees and began stuffing the stray jewels into their bulging pockets. The trail of jewels led them across the hall to the little door opening on the stairway, and up this stairway they scrambled as fast as they could go.

At the top of the stair, in the turret, they found another round room lit by three narrow, barred windows, and in the centre of this turret chamber, likewise laden with gold and jewels, they found another ebony table. With shrieks of delight, the King and the Chancellor and the Chamberlain ran to this second treasure, and plunged their hands in the glittering golden mass.

Suddenly, a great bell rang in the castle, a great brazen bell whose deep clang beat about them in throbbing, singing waves.

"What's that?" said the three rogues in one breath, and rushed together to the door.

It was locked! An instant later there was a heavy explosion which threw them all to the floor, tossing the treasure over them; and then,

wonder of wonders, the castle turret, with the three rogues imprisoned in it, detached itself from the rest of the castle, and flew off into the air. From the barred windows, the King, the Chamberlain, and the Chancellor saw league upon league of the forest rushing by beneath them. Suddenly the flying room began to descend swiftly, and landed lightly as a bird in the middle of a castle courtyard. Strange-looking fellows with human bodies and heads of horses came rushing toward the enchanted turret, and seized its prisoners. In a few moments they were brought before the King to whom the treasure belonged.

Now this King was a brother of the dwarf whom the hunter had rescued from the pit. He had a little gold crown on his head, and sat on a little golden throne with cushions of crimson velvet.

"With what are these three charged?" said the Dwarf-King.

"With having tried to rob the treasure castle,

Your Majesty," replied one of the horse-headed servitors in a firm, stable tone.

"Then send for the Lord Chief Justice at once," said the Dwarf-King.

The three culprits were left standing uneasily in a kind of cage. They would have tried to speak, but every time they opened their mouths, one of the guards gave them a dig in the ribs.

For a space of five minutes there was quiet in the crowded throne-room, a quiet broken now and then by a veiled cough or the noise of shuffling feet. Presently, from far away, came the clear, sweet call of silver trumpets.

"He's coming! He's coming!" murmured many voices. A buzz of excitement filled the room. Several people had to be revived with smelling salts.

The trumpets sounded a second time. The excitement increased.

The trumpets sounded a third time, near at hand. A man's voice announced in solemn tones, "The Lord Chief Justice approaches."

The audience grew very still. Hardly a rustle or a flutter was heard. Suddenly the great tapestry curtains which overhung the door parted, and there appeared, first of all, an usher, clad in red velvet and carrying a golden wand; then came two golden-haired pages, also clad in red velvet and carrying a flat black-lacquer box on a velvet cushion. Last of all came an elderly man dressed in black, and carrying a golden perch on which sat a fine green parrot. On reaching the centre of the hall, the parrot flapped its wings, arranged an upstart feather or two, and then resumed that solemn dignity for which birds and animals are so justly famous.

With great ceremony the gentleman in black placed the Lord Chief Justice on a lacquer stand close by the throne of the Dwarf-King.

Trumpets sounded. Two servitors hurried forward with the captive King.

"Your Venerability," spoke the Dwarf-King to the parrot, who watched him intently out

of its round yellow eye, and nodded its head, "this rascal has been taken in the act of robbing the treasure castle. What punishment do you suggest?"

At these words, the two golden-haired pages, advancing with immense solemnity, lifted the lacquer box to within reach of the parrot's beak. The box was full of cards. Over them, swaying from one leg to the other as he did so, the parrot swept his head.

An icy silence fell over the throng. The King, the Chancellor, and the Chamberlain quaked in their shoes. Presently the parrot picked out a card, and the gentleman in black handed it to the Dwarf-King.

"Prisoner," said the Dwarf-King to the other King, "the Lord Chief Justice condemns you to be for the rest of your natural life Master Sweeper of the Palace Chimneys."

Discreet applause was heard. The Chancellor was then hurried forward, and the bird picked out a second card.

"Prisoner," said the Dwarf-King, "the Lord Chief Justice condemns you to be for the rest of your natural life Master Washer of the Palace Windows."

More discreet applause was heard. And now the Chamberlain was brought to the bar. The parrot gave him quite a wicked eye, and hesitated for some time before drawing a card.

"Prisoner," said the Dwarf-King, reading the card which the parrot had finally chosen, "the Lord Chief Justice condemns you for the rest of your natural life to be Master Beater of the Palace Carpets."

Great applause followed this sage judgment.

So the three rogues were led away, and unless you have heard to the contrary, they are still making up for their wicked lives by enforced diligence at their tasks. The palace has five hundred and ninety-six chimneys, eight thousand, seven hundred and fifty-three windows, and eleven hundred and ninety-nine large dust-gathering carpets, and the chimneys, windows,

and carpets have to be swept, washed, and beaten at least once a week.

Now when the King, the Chancellor, and the Chamberlain failed to return, the people took the hunter out of his prison and made him king, because he was the richest and most powerful of them all.

As for the treasure of the treasure castle, it is still there, packed in the linen sacks, lying just inside the great door.

Perhaps some day you may find it. If you do, don't be greedy, and don't go up to the turret chamber.

PRINCE SNEEZE

Once upon a time a king and a queen gave a magnificent party in honor of the christening of their new-born son, Prince Rolandor. To this party the royal parents took good care to invite every single fairy in Fairyland, for they knew very well the unhappy consequences of forgetting to invite fairies to christenings.

When all the invitations had been sent out, the Queen went down to the kitchen to superintend the cooking of the master-dainty of the feast, a huge strawberry-tart.

The morning on which the grand ceremony was to take place arrived. At half-past ten the Court Astrologer, who was master of ceremonies, gave the order to form in line; and at ten minutes to eleven the splendid procession started for the church. The road was lined with the King's vassals shouting, "Hurrah, hurrah!" Countless little elves with gauzy wings watched from the branches of the trees; and the great cathedral bells went *clang, bang, clang,* as merrily as could be.

Just behind the royal body-guard came the King's gold-and-diamond coach shining in the sunlight of June, with the King and the Queen in it on one side and the Court Astrologer and the fairy Titania, prospective godparents of the little Prince, on the other. The Prince himself, swathed in a wonderful silk mantle edged

with pearls and turquoises, slept in the Astrologer's arms.

The procession entered the church, where the venerable Lord Archbishop, surrounded by a magnificent choir, was awaiting its coming. A hush went over the great assembly as the parents and the godparents advanced to the flower-decked font, and the silence lasted until His Eminence had sprinkled the Prince and given him the name of Rolandor. Then the bells rang again, the organ roared so that the windows shook in their casements, and the choristers sang like birds on a summer afternoon.

The christening over, the procession went back to the castle, past the waiting rows of bystanders, not one of whom had changed his place or gone away, so superb had been the spectacle.

The christening banquet was laid in the great hall of the castle, and, thanks to the Court Astrologer, things went off beautifully. It was

the only large banquet ever known in the history of the world where courses were served all at one time, and while one person was finishing an ice, another was not beginning with the soup. Nor was the menu mixed, which happens so frequently to-day that you are apt to have soup, ice, cake, roast, soup, and a roast again. No, from soup to ice the banquet was a huge success; but, alas, disaster came with the strawberry-tart.

As the Queen was chatting with the Lord Chancellor of the Enchanted Islands, she happened to notice — for like a good hostess she had been keeping an eye to the comfort of her guests — that nobody on the right-hand side of the hall had been served with strawberry-tart. Almost at the same moment, the chief cook, looking rather pale and worried, bustled through the throng and whispered in her ear, "Your Majesty, the strawberry-tart has given out!"

The Queen turned pale. At length she man-

aged to ask in a weak voice, "Have you plenty of other pastries?"

"Yes, Your Majesty," replied the cook.

"Then let them be served at once."

The cook withdrew, and the Queen, though somewhat shaken, took up the conversation again. Ten minutes passed, and she was beginning to forget her start, when a voice, rising clear and rasping over the hubbub of the hall, said suddenly, "Where's my piece of strawberry-tart?"

Everybody turned toward the speaker, an elderly fairy from the Kingdom of the Black Mountains, named Malvolia. She stood up in her place, her arms akimbo, glowering at her plate, on which an attendant had just deposited a small chocolate éclair.

"Where's my piece of strawberry-tart?" she repeated.

The Queen rose. "I am very sorry, Madam Malvolia," said she in her sweetest voice, "but the strawberry-tart has given out."

"Hoity-toity," answered Malvolia rudely; "you mean that you only baked enough for your own personal friends."

At this several guests cried, "Sh! Sh!" and the King began to look worried.

"We will send for some at once," announced His Majesty.

"Oh yes, — strawberry-tart baked by the Queen's own hands for her own dear friends," said Malvolia sneeringly; "but for me, a fairy of age and distinction, an ordinary, low baker's éclair. The Kingdom of the Black Mountains has been deliberately insulted in my person!"

"No, no, no, no!" cried the King and the Queen. "We assure you, madam, that it was a simple mischance."

"Pish and tush!" replied Malvolia, who, like a great many people, secretly enjoyed feeling herself aggrieved. "I consider the affair an affront, a deliberate affront. And you shall pay dear for this humiliation," she screamed, quickly losing control of her temper. "Every

time the Prince sneezes something shall change until—"

At this very moment, alas, a northeast wind blew gustily through the open windows of the hall, shaking the tapestries from the walls, and carrying away the last of Malvolia's sentence. The angry fairy turned herself into a great black raven and flew, cawing hoarsely, over the heads of the banqueters and out of the window with the wind.

A baby's cry was heard, and the King and the Queen rushed panic-stricken to where their little son lay in his cradle on a raised platform at the head of the hall. The little Prince's fat, pink face was twisted into dreadful lines; he opened his mouth wide several times and half closed it again; then, opening it wider than ever, he sneezed a terrible sneeze.

There came a loud clap of thunder. When the confusion was over, the Court Astrologer was found to have turned into an eight-day clock, with a sun, moon, and stars arrange-

ment, a planetary indicator, and a calendar calculated for two thousand years. The banquet ended rather gloomily, although the gifts of the other fairies, such as health, wealth, and beauty, managed to make everyone a little more cheerful.

When the guests were gone, the King and Queen sent for Doctor Pill, the court physician, to consult him in regard to the measures which ought to be taken to prevent the Prince's sneezing. As for the poor Court Astrologer, he was hung up in the sacristy of the cathedral, and every eight days his wife wound him up, with tears.

"What shall we do, doctor?" asked the King rather mournfully.

"The Prince must be preserved from the things which cause sneezing," said the doctor sagely.

"Such as draughts?" suggested the King.

"Draughts, head-colds, snuff, and pepper," answered the leech. "Let his little highness be

put into a special suite of rooms; admit no person to them until he has been examined for head-cold, and has put on germ-proof garments; and as his little highness grows older, forbid the use of pepper in his food. Better still, if Your Majesty has a castle in the mountains, let the Prince be taken there for the sake of the purer air."

"There is the tower on the Golden Mountain," said the King.

At this the Queen began to weep again, for she, quite naturally, did not wish to part with her child.

"But, my dear, we can't have him sneezing, and things changing all the time," said the King.

"I beg Your Majesty to consider the danger of a head-cold," put in the doctor.

"Yes, think of the danger of a head-cold," echoed the King, who saw clearer than the Queen the chaos that might result if the Prince was attacked by a prolonged fit of sneezing.

"People with head-colds may sneeze ten or fifteen times a day."

"Or fifty," said the doctor.

"Or fifty," echoed the King again, shaking his head, for he was torn between paternal love and kingly duty. "Imagine fifty enchantments in a day! By eventide the whole kingdom would be upset, undone, and the people plotting a revolution."

"The tower on the Golden Mountain is in a fine healthful locality," said the doctor, "and the Prince could be brought up as happily there as in the palace."

So at length the Queen consented. In a few days the little Prince, who had not sneezed a second time, was removed to the tower on the Golden Mountain. His room, designed by Doctor Pill, was completely protected from draughts, and every breath of air that entered it was tri-bi-sterilized. Mrs. Pill, who had been a hospital nurse, took care of him. Three times a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and

Fridays, his royal parents rode out to the tower, and after putting on germ-proof garments, were admitted to the nursery of their infant son.

And so the years went by. Nobody was found able to break Malvolia's spell, and the clue to its undoing had been carried away by the wind. Malvolia herself had disappeared.

The Prince became a handsome little boy. Accomplished teachers taught him history, music, drawing, dancing, and all the other things that a prince ought to know. But of real life he knew almost nothing at all.

His most faithful friend during these lonely years was a French poodle, who spoke both French and English exceedingly well. Of course, he had a marked canine accent, rather growling his *g*'s and howling the *aw*'s and the *ow*'s, but his words were well chosen and his vocabulary extensive. Never was seen a more friendly, wise, and devoted animal.

When the King decided to have him sent away

for a while, for he feared that his son was getting a touch of Poldo's *barky* manner of speaking, from too close an association, the little Prince became really ill from grief, and the King was forced to alter his decision.

During his imprisonment in the tower, in spite of all precautions, the Prince sneezed three times. At the first sneeze, all the dogs in the kingdom except Poldo changed into cats, and all the cats into dogs. Though this was not a serious trouble, the change was certainly inconvenient. All the dog-cats came out meowing at people as the dogs used to bark at them, and they chased people down the street; the cat-dogs, on the other hand, stayed in the kitchen under the stove, and watched for mice in the pantry. Great St. Bernards might be seen licking their paws and rubbing them over their foreheads, and fat, old cat-lap-dogs used to try to purr.

At the second sneeze, all the elderly gentlemen over seventy changed into elm trees, a

proceeding that caused a terrible lot of trouble.

At the third sneeze, all the people in the pictures at the Art Museum became alive, and for a week the soldiers of the royal guard spent most of their time rescuing poor, bewildered fauns, satyrs, nymphs, Roman senators, and long dead celebrities and historical personages from the worst destitution. The King finally had to build a special castle for them.

As the Prince's twenty-first birthday drew near, he began to feel very sad at the idea of having to stay shut up in the tower all his life. Though he was a very brave and very manly young man, he lay down on his couch and wept in sorrow.

Suddenly, standing with his forepaws on the coverlet, "Why do you weep, dear master?" said the little dog.

"At my fate," replied the poor Prince. "I cannot bear to think that I may have to spend all my days in this tower, and never see the great wide world."

The poodle was silent for a few minutes. At length he said, "Dear Prince Rolandor, do not give up hope. Have you ever thought of consulting my old master, the Giant of the North Pole? He has a large chest in his palace full of secrets which the winds have overheard, and perhaps the key to Malvolia's spell is among them. If you will have a warm fur coat and four fur boots made for me, I will go to the Giant and ask him."

The Prince gave his consent, and on the next day the royal tailor made the poodle a magnificent sealskin coat and four splendid fur-lined boots. Then the King wished him good speed, the Queen cried over him, and the Prince, who could see from his high tower every corner of the kingdom, watched him till he disappeared over the hills and far away.

Straight north the poodle ran. Soon he had left the fertile plains behind him, and entered great, black pine forests where never a road was to be seen. The cold wind howled through

the trees, and at night the brilliant stars sparkled over the dark and waving branches. Hungry wolves and savage bears often pursued him, but somehow he always managed to escape them all. At the end of the forest he found the frozen ocean lit by the shuddering light of the aurora, flashing in a great fan from east to west. Past white-tusked walruses and sleepy penguins he flew, till on the eleventh day he saw the green, icy pinnacles of the Giant's palace against the waving curtain of the Polar lights. On the evening of the twelfth day he entered the castle.

The Giant of the North Pole was a tall, strong, yellow-haired fellow wearing a crown of ice and a great sweeping mantle made from the white fur of the polar bear. His servants were the Gusts,—strange, supple, shadowy creatures moving quickly to and fro,—and his courtiers were the whirlwinds and the storms. The Giant's wife sat by his side; she had dark hair and eyes of icy, burning blue.

"Welcome, little Poldo," said the Giant; and his voice sounded like the wind in the tree-tops; "what seek you here?"

"I seek some words of the Fairy Malvolia which were carried away by the northeast wind at Prince Rolandor's christening," replied the poodle.

"Whew, oo-oo," whistled the Giant of the North Pole. "If I have them, the words are yours."

He summoned two Gusts to bring forth the chest of secrets. It was made of black stone, and edged with diamonds of ice. In it were stored all the mysteries which the wind had ever overheard; there were secrets, confessions, vows, merry laughs, and simple words. And sure enough, in the corner of the chest lay the rest of Malvolia's spell—a row of little, old-fashioned, dusty words; the words: "Until he finds someone brave enough to marry him."

So the good poodle learned the words by heart, thanked the Giant, and hurried home

with the message. When he came to the King's palace, he ran, barking with joy, right into the King's own room. There he saw the unhappy parents.

"Have you found the last of the sentence?" cried the Queen.

"Yes," said Poldo. "The spell will end when the prince marries."

That very evening the King and the Queen sent forth ambassadors to ask for the hand of the loveliest princess of all Fairyland, Princess Adatha of the Adamant Mountains. But so afraid was Adatha of being turned into something else, that she refused the offer.

The King and the Queen then made a request for the hand of Princess Alicia of the Crystal Lakes. But Alicia also was afraid of being turned into something else, and she too refused the alliance. So did the Princess of the Golden Coasts, the Princess of the Seven Cities, and many others. Finally the only princess left in all Fairyland was a princess who herself

lay under an enchantment. A jealous witch had turned her golden hair bright blue, and given her a nose a foot long. This unhappy maiden was the only princess willing to accept poor Rolandor.

The wedding day arrived. The Prince, though perhaps a little pale from his confined life, looked very handsome, and led his ugly bride to the altar like a man. Just exactly as the marriage ceremony was half over, a spasm contorted the muscles of the Prince's face; the poor young man felt strongly inclined to sneeze. Though he could be seen making heroic efforts to control the impulse, the audience got very nervous and panicky.

All was in vain! The Prince sneezed, "Ker choo!" A terrific clap of thunder rent the air, and everybody looked about to see what had happened.

The effect of the sneeze was an odd one. As it had occurred exactly at the moment when the Prince was *half-married,* the spell had

reacted *upon itself*. "Just like a kick from a gun," Dr. Pill said next day.

The cats became dogs again, and the dogs became cats; the elm trees became cross, elderly gentlemen looking for their families; the poor, excited Roman senators, fauns, nymphs, satyrs, celebrities and historical personages, went back to their pictures; and to cap the climax, the ugly bride became once more her sweet and lovely self.

While everybody was cheering, who should walk out of the sacristy but the Court Astrologer! An instant later, he had fallen into the affectionate arms of the faithful wife who had wound him up for twenty-one years.

After the wedding reception, the Prince and his bride went on a honeymoon to the Enchanted Islands. As for Poldo the poodle, he was created Prime Minister and lived to a fine old age.

MARIANNA

Once upon a time a wicked nobleman rose in rebellion against his rightful king, and taking the royal forces by surprise, defeated them and seized the kingdom. The dethroned King, who had been severely wounded in battle, was cast in prison, where he soon died; but his widow, the Queen, managed to escape from the

palace before the usurper could lay hands upon her.

Into the dark forest which lay behind the palace ran the Queen, holding her baby daughter in her arms. It was winter time, and a heavy snow had hidden the foot-paths and the roads. Presently the Queen realized that she was lost. All afternoon, however, she trudged bravely on through the silence and the cold, her heart sinking as mile after mile revealed no sign of a house or a shelter.

But late in the afternoon, when the red shield of the sun could scarcely be seen through the tangle of the wild wood-branches, she perceived a light coming from a little grove of cedars by the shore of a frozen lake. The Queen made her way toward this light, and discovered a little thatched hut in the silent wood; it was the house of one of the dwarfs of the forest. The dwarf took pity on the Queen, but his efforts were vain, for the poor woman was so weak and exhausted that she died with-

out telling the dwarf anything about herself or the child she carried.

So the little dwarf, who was a good, kind old fellow, brought the little girl up as if she were his own child. His brother, the dwarf of the mountain, made her the prettiest red-leather shoes, and his cousins, the dwarfs of the pines, made the little girl dresses from cloth woven on fairy looms.

Now, on the night her mother brought her to the hut, the little girl was wearing a golden heart-shaped locket, with a crown and the letter M upon it in diamonds. So the dwarf called the little girl Marianna.

Seventeen years passed, and Marianna grew to be quite the loveliest lass in all the world. Her hair was as black as the raven's wing, her eyes were as blue as the midsummer sea, and her skin was fair as the petal of a rose. One spring morning a little yellow bird flew into the cedar grove, and gave the dwarf a letter which it held in its beak.

The dwarf read the letter, and said to Marianna, "Little Marianna, the Emperor of the Elves has bidden me come to the great assembly of the dwarfs which is to be held next year on the Golden Mountain. Alas, what are we to do? I can not take you with me, dear child, for it is forbidden on pain of death to bring mortals to the assembly, nor can I leave you here in this lonely wood."

To this Marianna replied, "Do not fear, dear father. Give me but yon crystal flask of the water of healing, and I shall go forth into the world until it is time for you to return again. Perhaps I shall discover somebody who can tell me the meaning of this locket, or the history of my dear mother."

So the dwarf took his knotted staff, and went away over hill, over dale to the Golden Mountain.

Then Marianna took the crystal flask of the water of healing, and walked boldly out of the wood into the wide, wide world. It was

the middle of the spring, the ice and snow had all disappeared; the trees were putting forth their leaves, and there were clusters of primroses by the roadside. In the swaying, rustling heart of a great elm tree, a little thrush was singing. Through cities and towns went lovely Marianna, bringing good cheer to the helpless and the sick, and curing all who came to her, rich and poor, with the wonderful water of healing. But never did she find anybody who could tell her about the gold heart with the diamond crown.

Now it came to pass that, as Marianna was one day walking through a village in the heart of the Adamant Mountains, a ragged old woman besought her with tears to come to a hamlet which stood at the head of a high and dangerous path. Touched by the old woman's supplication, Marianna followed her to the hamlet, and found in a wretched hut, lying on a wretched bed, a beautiful young peasant girl dying of a fever. So Marianna touched the girl

with the water of healing, and in an instant she became well and strong.

"Dear lady," said the peasant girl, pressing Marianna's hand to her lips, "how sweet and kind thou art! Great is the debt I owe thee."

And as the girl poured out her thanks, Marianna heard a faint "chirp, chirp," and looking down, beheld a little yellow bird crouching on the hearthstone. Every now and then he hid his head under his wings and cried unhappily. It was the yellow bird which had brought the message from the Emperor of the Elves.

"Poor little bird," said Marianna, bending down and taking him up in her hands, "why criest thou so mournfully? Who hath done thee harm?"

But the bird uttered only a forlorn little cry, and hid his head again under his wings.

"I found him on the rocks at the mountain-top yesterday," said the mother. "Someone has wounded him. His wing is broken."

And she put the bird on the floor of the house

and bade Marianna watch how he fluttered trailing a wing in the dust. Again Marianna stooped, and picking up the bird, touched the wounded wing with the water of healing. Scarcely had she done so, when the yellow bird burst into a joyous and golden song, and flying to the window, beat madly against the panes. Then the peasant girl threw open the casement, and the yellow bird flew out into the streaming sun.

"He is gone forever," said the peasant girl.

"Nay, he returns," said Marianna, gently, as the yellow bird flew back and perched in the sheltering bower of Marianna's arms. Then, accompanied by the peasant girl and the yellow bird, who flew singing before her, Marianna went down the dangerous path to the high road in the valley. When they reached the foot of the path, the peasant girl cried: —

"Farewell, dear Marianna; may it some day be mine to repay thee!"

Into the world again went Marianna, and

with her went the yellow bird. Presently she came to the fairest land which she had ever seen, a land of rolling fields, little hills, and rivers bordered with pale willow trees. This pleasant land, unknown to Marianna, was part of her father's kingdom, and she was really its queen because her father had been the last rightful king.

Now while Marianna had been in the forest, the wicked nobleman who had stolen the kingdom from Marianna's father had died, leaving his brother Garabin in charge of the kingdom and of the interests of his little son, Prince Desiré. This Garabin, however, taking advantage of the youth and helplessness of his nephew, had himself assumed the state and airs of king. For some time he had enjoyed undisturbed the possession of his stolen throne; but as Desiré grew taller and stronger every year, Garabin began to fear the day when he would be compelled to resign in favor of his nephew.

When the Prince reached his twentieth year, Garabin would certainly have killed him openly had he dared; but, fearing the people, he resolved to use secret methods, and bribed a cruel magician to afflict poor Desiré with a deadly and mysterious malady. Of this malady, Desiré was slowly dying, for no medicine could cure him or even give him any relief from his constant pain. Every morning the cruel Garabin, in the hope of finding his nephew dead, would go to the sick room; and you may be sure that his wicked heart rejoiced when he found the Prince weaker and more feverish.

Garabin had just returned from a visit to the Prince, who was rapidly failing, when the Captain of the Castle Guard came to him with the news that the wonderful Marianna had arrived in the kingdom. The King gave orders that she be brought before him. So Marianna, walking between two halberdiers and followed across the courtyard by crowds of curious people, was led before the King. The little

yellow bird sat on Marianna's shoulder, and never did maiden appear lovelier or more gentle.

Scarcely had Garabin set eyes on Marianna, when he caught sight of the golden locket which she wore about her neck. Had he not been very old and crafty, he would have started from his golden throne, for he knew that the little golden heart set with diamonds had been one of the crown jewels, and that therefore Marianna must be the missing Princess, and rightful queen of the kingdom.

What was he to do? If he refused to let Marianna help the Prince, the people might begin to suspect him, and start a revolution which would thrust him from his throne; if he allowed Marianna to cure the Prince, the Prince would certainly demand the kingdom on his twenty-first birthday. What was he to do with Marianna, whose right to the throne was superior even to his nephew's? Perplexed, and with fear in his heart, the King sought the

cruel magician who had cast the spell on Desiré.

The magician lived in a gloomy tower, and had an enchanted black dog that he fed with flaming coals. He listened to Garabin's story, stirring a great cauldron all the while, and said, "Do not fear. We will destroy both claimants to the throne at once."

Garabin rubbed his hands together with glee. "To-night I shall cast a spell of sleep on Marianna, steal the crystal flask, empty it of the water of healing, and refill it with a liquid which will cause death within a night and a day. I shall then replace the flask before Marianna wakes. You will allow Marianna to visit the Prince; she will touch him with the deadly water, and the Prince will die. You can then try Marianna for having killed the Prince, and condemn her to be thrown from the precipice."

So pleased was Garabin with this horrid plot, that he could have danced for joy. That very night, the magician filled Marianna's flask with the poisonous water, and departed, thinking

that nobody had noticed him. The yellow bird, however, had seen everything, and followed the magician to note where he hid the real water of healing.

The next morning Marianna was once more led before the King.

"Welcome, thrice welcome, lovely maiden," said Garabin with the most dreadful hypocrisy. "I have long hoped that you would turn your footsteps hither, for my poor dear nephew, Prince Desiré, only son of the late King, has been ill for some months of a malady no physician can cure. Perhaps you can cure him with the water of healing."

Marianna replied that she would do her best to help the Prince; so the Court Chamberlain gave her his arm, and escorted her to the Prince's sick room. The King and many courtiers followed after him.

Desiré lay in a great old-fashioned bed, his face flushed with fever. So weak was the poor Prince, that he could scarcely lift his head to

look at his visitors. A great pity swept over Marianna's heart the instant she saw him; as for Desiré, he fell madly in love with Marianna at first sight.

Now just as Marianna bent over the Prince to touch his forehead with the water of healing, the yellow bird screamed and cried as madly as if he were caught in a net. Marianna looked at the crystal flask. Nothing seemed changed; the water within seemed as pure and diamond-like as ever. She touched the Prince with the liquid. Alas, in a moment, so terrible was the magician's poison that the Prince turned white as the driven snow, and fell back on the pillows insensible. The lookers-on, who had expected to see him spring up entirely cured, began to murmur, and Marianna herself, terrified at what had happened, let fall the flask, which broke into a thousand sparkling pieces.

Suddenly, Garabin cried at the top of his voice, "Seize the witch; she has killed the Prince!"

Presently there was a great confusion, rough hands seized Marianna, and somebody caught the yellow bird. The Prince remained insensible on the bed. At high noon, a trial was held, and since the doctors declared that the Prince was dying, Marianna was condemned to be thrown from the precipice. When somebody asked about the yellow bird, Garabin laughed, and gave orders that the cook should wring its neck, and toss it to the cat.

So Marianna was hurried to a dark prison-room and loaded with chains, and the yellow bird was taken to the castle kitchen, and given to the cook.

"Here, you wring its neck," said the cook to one of her helpers, "while I go call the cat."

By great good fortune, the cook's helper was no other than the peasant girl whom Marianna had saved. This girl recognized the yellow bird, and instead of wringing its neck, let it fly out of the window. The yellow bird flew to the window of the magician's room. The

magician was in the chamber, stirring the giant cauldron. The bird flew to the window of Prince Desiré's room, and saw that he was still insensible.

An hour later the castle-bell began to toll, and a dismal procession was seen walking from the castle toward the frightful cliff from which condemned witches and sorcerers were thrown. First came a troop of soldiers, then Marianna, weighted down with chains, and last of all, a little group in which were Garabin, the magician, and some of Garabin's favorites.

The bell kept on sadly tolling and tolling. It roused the Prince from his swoon, and with his last measure of strength, poor Desiré dragged himself to the window. The procession was then passing directly underneath the window, and Desiré's eyes met the eyes of Marianna.

"Stop! Stop!" cried the poor Prince, wildly; "I forbid—"

An instant later he sank fainting to the floor. The procession went on.

Meanwhile the yellow bird had returned to the magician's chamber. It was empty. With a joyous cry, the bird fluttered through the window-bars, and discovered the phial into which the magician had poured the water of healing. Clutching it in his claws, the bird flew once more to the Prince's room. Desiré still lay in a heap by the window, and over him the yellow bird poured the contents of the phial.

The Prince sprang up, strong as a lion, seized his sword, and rushed down to save Marianna. He arrived at the cliff just as the poor maiden was about to be pushed off into space, and standing by her side, dared any one to lay hands upon her.

Garabin, seeing his precious plot miscarry, grew mad with rage.

"Seize them," cried he, "and toss them both over the precipice!"

So the soldiers rushed at Marianna and the Prince, intending to carry out their wicked

master's orders. But even as they did so, there came a flash of flame and the little dwarf, Marianna's foster-father, took his place beside the lovers.

"Cruel King!" cried the dwarf sternly, "and thou, wicked and perfidious magician, the hour of thy punishment is at hand."

Immediately the sky grew black, the lightning crashed, and there arose a terrible, howling wind. Three giant gusts drove fiercely by, the first one blowing the King and the magician head-over-heels over the precipice, the second carrying away the soldiers, and the third the rascally favorites. When the sky cleared, only the dwarf, Marianna, and Desiré were left of the company.

"Marianna," said the little dwarf, "the Emperor of the Elves has told me all your history, and it is thanks to him that I have returned in time, with the storm at my heels. You, Marianna, are the rightful Queen of this country."

"Dear Queen," said the honest and gallant Desiré, "let me be the first of your subjects to salute you." And he knelt before her, and humbly kissed her hand.

"Nay, Prince," said the young Queen, answering the adoring look in her lover's eyes, "your father took the kingdom; if I were you, I should take the Queen."

Which was a bit forward, of course, but nobody minded that very much in those fairy times.

So Desiré and Marianna were married, and lived happily ever after. The yellow bird went to the wedding, and when the ceremony was over rose singing into the air, and flew joyously home to the land of the Elves.

THE LOST HALF-HOUR

Once upon a time there was an old widow woman who had three sons: the first two were clever enough, but the third, Bobo by name, was little better than a silly simpleton. All his mother's scoldings and beatings—and she smacked the poor lad soundly a dozen times a day—did him no good whatever.

Now it came to pass that one morning Princess Zenza, the ruler of the land, happened to pass by the cottage and heard Bobo being given a terrible tongue-lashing. Curious as to the cause of all the noise, the Princess drew rein, and summoned Bobo's mother to come near. On hearing her story, it occurred to the Princess that so silly a lad might amuse her; so she gave the mother a golden florin, and took poor silly Bobo with her to be her page.

You may be sure that it did not take the wise folk at the castle long to discover how great a simpleton had arrived. Courtiers, footmen, lackeys, turnspits even, were forever sending

Just as the dragon's mouth was at its widest . . . .

him off on ridiculous errands. Now he would be sent to find a white crow's feather or a spray of yellow bluebells; now he was ordered to look for a square wheel or a glass of dry water. Everybody laughed at him and made fun of him — that is, everybody except little Tilda, the kitchen-maid. When poor Bobo used to return from some wild-goose chase, tired out, mud-stained, and often enough wet to the skin, instead of laughing, little Tilda would find him a glass of warm milk, hang his coat by the fire to dry, and tell him not to be such a simpleton again. Thus, after a while, Bobo learned to ask Tilda's advice before going away on a wild-goose chase, and was in this way saved from many a jest.

Tilda, the kitchen-maid, was as sweet and pretty as she was kind and good. She was said to be the daughter of an old crone who had come to the castle one day, asking for help.

One pleasant mid-summer morning, when

Bobo had been nearly a year at the castle, Princess Zenza overslept half an hour and did not come down to breakfast at the usual time. When she did get up, she found her court waiting for her in the castle gardens. As she came down the steps of the garden terrace, the Princess looked up at the castle clock to see how late she was, and said to her lady in waiting,—

"Dear me—why, I 've lost half an hour this morning!"

At these words, Bobo, who was in attendance, pricked up his ears and said,—

"Please, Your Highness, perhaps I can find it."

At this idea of finding a lost half-hour, the Princess laughed, and found herself echoed by the company.

"Shall we send Bobo in search of the lost half-hour?" said the Princess to the courtiers.

"Yes! Yes!" cried the courtiers. "Bobo shall look for the lost half-hour."

"I'll give him a horse," said one. "I'll give

him my old hat," said another. "He can have an old sword I broke last week," said still another.

And so, in less time than it takes to tell about it, poor simpleton Bobo was made ready for his journey.

Before he left the castle, Bobo went down to the kitchen to say good-bye to Tilda.

"What, off again?" said the little kitchen-maid. "Where are you going now?"

"The Princess has lost a half-hour and I am going in search of it," said Bobo, proudly. And he told how the Princess herself had commanded him to seek the half-hour through the world, and promised to bring Tilda a splendid present when he returned.

The good kitchen-maid said little, for she feared lest some misadventure overtake the poor simpleton; but when the chief cook was not looking, she tucked a fresh currant-bun into Bobo's pocket, and wished him the best of good fortune.

So Bobo went to the castle gate, and mounted his horse, which stumbled and was blind in one eye.

"Good-bye, Bobo," cried the assembled courtiers, who were almost beside themselves with laughter at the simpleton and his errand. "Don't fail to bring back the lost half-hour!"

So Bobo rode over the hills and far away. Every now and then he would stop a passer-by and ask him if he had seen a lost half-hour.

The first person whom he thus questioned was an old man who was wandering down the high road that leads from the Kingdom of the East to the Kingdom of the West.

"A lost half-hour?" said the old man. "I 've lost something much more serious, I 've lost my reputation. You have n't seen a lost reputation lying about here, have you? It was very dignified and wore tortoise-shell glasses."

But Bobo had to answer "No," and the old man wandered on again.

Another day the simpleton encountered a tall,

dark, fierce kind of fellow, who answered his polite question with a scream of rage.

"A half-hour," he roared. "No, I have n't seen your half-hour; I would n't tell you if I had; what's more, I don't want to see it. I 'm looking for something I 've lost myself. I 've lost my temper. I lost it two years ago at home, and have n't been able to find it anywhere since. Answer me, you silly, have you seen a lost temper anywhere? It 's about the size of a large melon and has sharp little points."

On Bobo's answering "No," this dreadful person uttered so perfectly awful a screech of rage, that Bobo's horse took fright and ran away with him, and it was all that Bobo could do to rein him in three miles farther down the road.

Still farther along, Bobo came to Zizz, the capital city of the Kingdon of the Seven Brooks, and was taken before the King himself.

"A lost half-hour?" said the King. "No, I

am quite sure it has not been seen in my dominions. Would you mind asking, as you go through the world, for news of my little daughter?" (Here the poor old King took out a great green handkerchief and wiped his eyes.) "She was stolen by the fairies on midsummer eve fifteen years ago. Find her, worthy Bobo, and an immense reward will be yours."

So Bobo left the proud city of Zizz, and once again rode over the hills and far away. But never a sign of the lost half-hour did he find, although he asked thousands of people. His faithful white horse died, and he continued his way on foot.

Three long years passed, and Bobo grew into a handsome lad, but remained a simpleton still. Finally, after he had wandered all about Fairyland, he came to the edge of the sea. Finding a ship moored in a little harbor, Bobo asked the sailors if they had seen a lost half-hour.

"No," said the sailors, "but we are going to

the Isles of Iron; suppose you go with us. The lost half-hour may be there."

So Bobo went aboard the ship, and sailed out upon the dark sea.

For two days the weather was warm and clear, but on the third day, there came a dreadful storm, and on the third night the vessel was driven far off her course into the unknown ocean, and was wrecked upon a mysterious island of rocks that shone in the night like wet matches. A great wave swept the decks, and Bobo was borne away from his companions and carried toward the shining land. Though pounded and battered by the foaming waves, the simpleton at length managed to reach the beach, and took refuge in a crevice of the cliff during the stormy night.

When the dawn broke, all sign of the ship had disappeared. Looking about, Bobo found himself on a lovely island whose heart was a high mountain mass hidden in the fog still sweeping in from the sea. There was not a house,

a road, or a path to be seen. Suddenly Bobo noticed a strange little door in the bark of a great lonely tree, and, opening this door, he discovered a little cupboard in which were a pair of wooden shoes. Above the shoes was a card, saying simply,—

PUT US ON.

So Bobo sat down on a stone by the foot of the tree, and put on the wooden shoes, which fitted him very nicely. Now these shoes were magic shoes, and Bobo had hardly stepped into them before they turned his feet inland. So Bobo obediently let the shoes guide him. At corners the shoes always turned in the right direction, and if Bobo forgot and blundered on the wrong way, the shoes swiftly began to pinch his toes.

For two days Bobo walked inland toward the great mountain. A warm wind blew the clouds and rain away, the sun shone sweet and clear. On the morning of the third day, the simpleton

entered a wood of tall silent trees, and as that day was drawing to a close, turrets of a magnificent castle rose far away over the leaves of the forest.

Bobo arrived at twilight.

He found himself in a beautiful garden, lying between the castle walls and the rising slopes of a great mountain. Strange to say, not a living creature was to be seen, and though there were lights in the castle, there was not even a warder at the gate. Suddenly a great booming bell struck seven o'clock; Bobo began to hear voices and sounds; and then, before the humming of the bell had died away, a youth mounted on a splendid black horse dashed at lightning speed out of the castle and disappeared in the wood. An old man with a white beard, accompanied by eleven young men,—whom Bobo judged, from their expressions, to be brothers,—stood by the gate to see the horseman ride away.

Plucking up courage, Bobo came forward,

fell on his knee before the old man, and told his story.

"Truly, you should thank the storm fairies," said the old man; "for had you not been wrecked upon this island, never would you have discovered the lost half-hour. I am Father Time himself, and these are my twelve sons, the Hours. Every day, one after the other, they ride for an hour round the whole wide world. Seven O'clock has just ridden forth. Yes, you shall have the lost half-hour, but you must look after my sons' horses for the space of a whole year."

To this Bobo willingly agreed. So Twelve O'Clock, who was the youngest of the Hours, took him to the stables and showed him the little room in the turret that he was to have. And thus for a year Bobo served Father Time and his sons. He took such good care of the great black horses of the Hours of the Night, and the white horses of the Hours of the Day, that they were never more proud and strong,

nor their coats smoother and more gleaming.

When the year was up, Bobo again sought out Father Time.

"You have served faithfully and well," said Father Time. "Here is your reward." And, with these words, he placed in Bobo's hands a small square casket made of ebony. "The half-hour lies inside. Don't try to peek at it or open the box until the right time has come. If you do, the half-hour will fly away and disappear forever."

"Farewell, Bobo," said kind young Twelve O'Clock, who had been the simpleton's good friend. "I, too, have a gift for thee. Drink this cup of water to the last drop." And the youth handed the simpleton a silver cup full to the brim of clear shining water.

Now this water was the water of wisdom, and when Bobo had drunk it, he was no longer a simpleton. And being no longer a simpleton, he remembered the man who had lost his reputation, the man who had lost his temper, and

the king whose daughter had been stolen by the fairies. So Bobo made so bold as to ask Father Time about them, for Father Time knows everything that has happened in the whole wide world.

"Tell the first," said Father Time, "that his reputation has been broken into a thousand pieces which have been picked up by his neighbors and carried home. If he can persuade his neighbors to give them up, he should be able to piece together a pretty good reputation again. As for the man who lost his temper, tell him that it is to be found in the grass by the roadside close by the spot where you first met him. As for the missing daughter, she is the kitchen-maid in Princess Zenza's palace, who is known as Tilda."

So Bobo thanked Father Time, and at noon, Twelve O'Clock placed him behind him on the white charger, and hurried away. So fast they flew that Bobo, who was holding the ebony casket close against his heart, was in great

danger of falling off. When they got to the seashore, the white horse hesitated not an instant, but set foot upon the water, which bore him up as if it had been, not water, but earth itself. Once arrived at the shore of Fairyland, Twelve O'Clock stopped, wished Bobo good-speed, and, rising in the air, disappeared into the glare of the sun. Bobo, with the precious ebony casket in his hand, continued on in the direction of Princess Zenza's palace.

On the second morning of his journey, he happened to see far ahead of him on the highway the unfortunate aged man who had lost his reputation. To him, therefore, Bobo repeated the counsel of Father Time, and sent him hurrying home to his neighbors' houses. Of the man who had lost his temper, Bobo found no sign. In the grass by the roadside, however, he did find the lost temper—a queer sort of affair like a melon of fiery red glass all stuck over with uneven spines and brittle thorns. Bobo, with great goodness of heart,

took along this extraordinary object, in the hope of finding its angry possessor.

Farther on, the lad encountered Tilda's father, the unhappy King, and delivered his message. The joy of the monarch knew no bounds, and Bobo, the one-time simpleton, became on the spot Lord Bobo of the Sapphire Hills, Marquis of the Mountains of the Moon, Prince of the Valley of Golden Apples, and Lord Seneschal of the proud City of Zizz—in a word, the greatest nobleman in all Fairyland. Then, having got together a magnificent cohort of dukes, earls, and counts, all in splendid silks, and soldiers in shining armor, the delighted King rode off to claim his missing daughter from Princess Zenza.

So on they rode, the harnesses jingling, the bridle-bells ringing, and the breastplates of the armed men shining in the sun. After a week of almost constant progress (for the King was so anxious to see his beloved daughter that he would hardly give the cavalcade time

to rest), they came to the frontiers of Princess Zenza's kingdom.

Strange to say, black mourning banners hung from the trees, and every door in the first village which the travelers saw was likewise hung with black streamers. On the steps of one of the cottages sat an old woman, all alone and weeping with all her might.

"What *is* the matter, my good woman?" said the King.

"O sir," said the peasant woman, "evil days have fallen upon our unhappy kingdom. Three days ago a terrible dragon alighted in the gardens of the palace and sent word to Princess Zenza that if within three days she did not provide him with someone brave enough to go home with him and cook his meals and keep his cavern tidy, he would burn our fields with his fiery breath. Yet who, I ask you, would be housekeeper for a dragon? Suppose he did n't like the puddings you made for him — why, he might eat you up! All would have been lost

had not a brave little kitchen-maid named Tilda volunteered to go. It is for her that we are mourning. At two o'clock she is to be carried off by the dragon. It is almost two now. Alas! Alas!"

Hardly were the words out of her mouth, when the town bell struck twice, solemnly and sadly.

"Quick! quick!" cried the King and Bobo in the same breath, "Let us hurry to the castle. We may save her yet."

But they knew in their hearts that they were too late, and that poor Tilda had given herself to the dragon. And so it proved. In spite of his mad dash, Bobo, who had spurred on ahead, arrived exactly half an hour late. The monstrous dragon with Tilda in his claws was just a little smoky speck far down the southern sky. Princess Zenza and her court stood by wringing their jeweled hands.

Suddenly Bobo thought of the half-hour. He had arrived half an hour late, *but he could have*

that half-hour back again! Things should be exactly as they were half an hour before.

He opened the cover of the ebony box. Something like a winged white flame escaped from it, and flew hissing through the air to the sun. As for the sun itself, turning round like a cartwheel and hissing like ten thousand rockets, it rolled back along the sky to the east. The hands of the clocks, which marked half-past two, whirred back to two o'clock in a twinkling. And, sure enough, there was brave little Tilda standing alone in a great field waiting for the dragon to come and take her away. Lumbering heavily along like a monstrous turtle, and snorting blue smoke, the dragon was advancing toward her.

Bobo ran down into the field and stood beside Tilda, ready to defend her to the end.

The dragon came nearer and nearer. Suddenly, angered by the sight of Bobo and his drawn sword, he roared angrily, but continued to approach. Bobo struck at him with

his sword. The blade broke upon his steely scales. The dragon roared again. Now just as the dragon's mouth was its widest, Bobo who had been searching his pockets desperately, hurled into it *the lost temper*.

There was a perfectly terrific bang! as if a million balloons had blown up all at once. For the dragon had blown up. The lost temper had finished him. Only one fragment of him, a tiny bit of a claw, was ever found.

Everybody, you may be sure, began to cry "Hurrah" and "Hooray," and soon they were firing off cannon and ringing all the bells. Then Tilda's father took her in his arms, and told her that she was a real princess. The Grand Cross of the Order of the Black Cat was conferred upon Bobo by Princess Zenza, who also asked his pardon for having treated him so shabbily. This Bobo gave readily. A wonderful fête was held. When the rejoicings were over, Bobo and Tilda were married, and lived happily together all their days.

THE ENCHANTED ELM

Once upon a time, while riding, a brave, young prince dashed merrily ahead of his friends, and after galloping across a ploughed field, turned his horse's head down a grassy road leading to a wood. For some time he cantered easily along, expecting any moment to hear the shouts and halloos of his friends following after; but they

by mistake took quite another road, and no sound except the pounding of his courser's hoofs reached the Prince's ear. Suddenly an ugly snarl and a short bark broke the stillness of the pleasant forest, and looking down, the Prince saw a gray wolf snapping at his horse's heels.

Though the horse, wild with fear, threatened to run away any instant, the Prince leaned over and struck the wolf with his whip.

Hardly had he done so, when an angry voice cried, "How dare you strike my pet?"

A little distance ahead, a wicked old witch stood at one side of the road. With its tail between its legs, the wolf cowered close to her skirts, and showed its long yellow fangs.

"Pet, indeed!" cried the Prince. "Keep him away from my horse or I will strike him again."

"At your peril, Prince," answered the witch. And then, as the Prince turned his horse's head and galloped back, she called out, "You shall rue this day! You shall rue this day!"

Now by the time the Prince had arrived at the ploughed field and the great road again, his friends had galloped on so far that they were lost to sight. Thinking that he might overtake them by following a shorter road, he turned down a byway skirting the wood in which he had encountered the enchantress. Presently he began to feel very thirsty. Chancing to see an old peasant woman in the fields, the Prince called to her and asked where he could find a roadside spring.

Now this old peasant woman was the wicked witch under another form. Overjoyed at having the Prince fall so easily into her power, she curtsied, and replied that within the wood was to be found the finest spring in the country. Anxious not to lose time, the Prince begged her to lead him to the water. Little did he know that the witch was leading him back into the wood, and that she had just bewitched the water!

When they arrived at the pool, the Prince

dismounted, and kneeling by the brim, made a cup of his hands and drank till his thirst was satisfied. He was just about to seize his horse again by the bridle and put his foot into the stirrup, when a terrible pang shot through his body, darkness swam before his eyes, his arms lengthened and became branches, his fingers, twigs; his feet shot into the ground, and he found himself turned into a giant elm.

A giant elm he was; a giant elm he remained. Unable to find him after a long search, his friends gave him up for lost, and a new Prince ruled over the land. Though the elm tried many times to tell passers-by of his plight, none ever seemed to understand his words. Again and again, when simple wood-cutters ventured into the great dark wood, he would tell them his story and cry out, "I am the Prince! I am the Prince!" But the wood-cutters heard only the wind stirring in the branches. Ah, how cold it was in winter when the skies were steely black and the giant stars sparkled icily! And

how pleasant it was when spring returned, and the gossipy birds came back again!

The first year a pair of wood-pigeons took to housekeeping in his topmost branches. The Prince was glad to welcome them, for though denied human speech, he understood the language of trees and birds. On Midsummer Eve, the pigeons said to him, "To-night the King of the Trees comes through the wood. Do you not hear the stir in the forest? All the real trees are preparing for the King's coming; they are shedding dead leaves and shaking out their branches."

"Tell me of the King," said the Prince.

"He is tall and dark and strong," said the doves. "He dwells in a great pine in the North. On Midsummer Eve, he goes through the world to see if all is well with the tree people."

"Do you think he can help me?" asked the Prince.

"You might ask him," replied the doves.

The long, long twilight of Midsummer Eve

came to a close; night folded the world beneath its starry curtains. At twelve o'clock, though not a breath of air was stirring, the trees were shaken as if by a mighty wind, the rustling of the leaves blending into strange and lovely music, and presently the King of the Trees entered the haunted wood. Even as the wood-doves had said, he was tall and dark and stately.

"Is all well with you, O my people?" said the King, in a voice as sweet and solemn as the wind in the branches on a summer's day.

"Yes, all is well," answered the trees softly. Though some replied, "I have lost a branch"; and a little tree called out unhappily, "My neighbors are shutting out all my sunlight."

"Then fare ye well, my people, till next Midsummer Eve," said the stately King. And he was about to stride onward through the dark wood when the enchanted Prince called aloud to him!

"Stay, O King of the Trees," cried the poor

Prince. "Hear me even though I am not of your people. I am a mortal, a prince, and a wicked witch has turned me into a tree. Can you not help me?"

"Alas, poor friend, I can do nothing," replied the King. "However, do not despair. In my travels through the world, I shall surely find someone who can help you. Look for me on next Midsummer Eve."

So the great elm swayed his branches sadly, and the King went on his way.

The winter came again, silent and dark and cold. At the return of spring, a maiden who dwelt with a family of wood-cutters came often to rest in the shade of the great tree. Her father had once been a rich merchant, but evil times had overtaken him, and at his death the only relatives who could be found to take care of the little girl were a family of rough wood-cutters in the royal service. These grudging folk kept the poor maiden always hard at work and gave her the most difficult household tasks.

The Prince, who knew the whole story, pitied her very much, and ended by falling quite in love with her. As for the unhappy maiden, it seemed to her that beneath the sheltering shade of the great elm she enjoyed a peace and happiness to be found nowhere else.

Now it was the custom of the wood-men to cut down, during the summer, such trees as would be needed for the coming winter, and one day the wood-cutter in whose family the maiden dwelt announced his intention of cutting down the great elm.

"Not the great elm which towers above all the forest?" cried the maiden.

"Yes, that very tree," answered the wood-cutter gruffly. "To-morrow morning we shall fell it to the ground, and to-morrow night we shall build the midsummer fire with its smaller branches. What are you crying about, you silly girl?"

"Oh, please don't cut the great elm!" begged the good maiden.

"Nonsense!" said the wood-cutter. "I wager you have been wasting your time under its branches. I shall certainly cut the tree down in the morning."

All night long, you may be sure, the maiden pondered on the best way to save the great tree; and since she was as clever as she was good, she at length hit upon a plan. Rising early on Midsummer Morn, she ran to the forest, climbed the great elm, and concealed herself in its topmost branches. She saw the rest of the wood beneath her, and the distant peaks of the Adamant Mountains; and she rejoiced in the dawn songs of the birds.

An hour after the sun had risen, she heard the voices of the wood-cutter and his men as they came through the wood. Soon the band arrived at the foot of the tree. Imagine the feelings of the poor Prince when he saw the sharp axes at hand to cut him down!

"I shall strike the first blow," said the chief wood-cutter, and he lifted his axe in the air.

Suddenly from the tree-top a warning voice sang,—

"Throw the axe down, harm not me.
I am an enchanted tree.
He who strikes shall breathe his last,
Before Midsummer Eve hath passed."

"There is a spirit in the tree," cried the wood-cutters, thoroughly frightened. "Let us hurry away from here before it does us a mischief." And in spite of all the chief wood-cutter's remonstrances, they ran away as fast as their legs could carry them.

The chief wood-cutter, however, was bolder-hearted, and lifted the axe again. As the blade shone uplifted in the sun, the maiden sang once more,—

"Throw the axe down, harm not me.
I am an enchanted tree.
He who strikes shall breathe his last
Before Midsummer Eve hath passed."

Hearing the voice again, the chief began to feel just the littlest bit alarmed; nevertheless,

he stood his ground and lifted the axe a third time. Once more the girl sang,—

"Throw the axe down, harm not me.
I am an enchanted tree.
He who strikes shall breathe his last
Before Midsummer Eve hath passed."

At the same moment, the elm managed to throw down a great branch which struck the rogue a sound thump on the shoulders. Now thoroughly terrified, the chief wood-cutter himself fled from the spot.

All day long, for fear lest he return, the maiden remained hidden in the tree. At twilight, overcome by weariness, she fell into a deep sleep. Just before midnight, alas, she was awakened from her slumber by hearing an angry voice cry,—

"Come down from the tree, wicked, deceitful girl, or I shall cut it down at once!"

Very much alarmed, the poor maiden looked down through the branches, and discovered the wood-cutter standing at the foot of the elm. A

lantern swung from his left hand, and his sharpest axe rested on his right shoulder. He had returned home, and not finding the maiden there, had suspected that it was her voice which had frightened his men away.

"Come down," roared the rascal. "I'll teach you, you minx, to play tricks with me. One—two—three." And lifting the axe in the air, he was about to send it crashing into the trunk of the elm, when the mysterious murmur which heralded the coming of the King of the Trees sounded through the wood. Perplexed and frightened again, the chief wood-cutter let fall his axe. Presently he perceived two beings coming toward him through the solemn forest. Uttering a howl of fear, the rogue would have fled; but, lifting his wand, the elder of the newcomers transfixed him to the spot. The two personages were the King of the Trees and his friend, the mighty enchanter, Gorbodoc.

"Descend and fear not, maiden," said the King of the Trees. "You have done bravely

and well. Your misfortunes are over, and a happier day is at hand."

So the brave girl hurried down the tree, and stood before the enchanter and the King. Very pretty she was, too, in her rustic dress and ribbons.

Lifting his wand with great solemnity, Gorbodoc touched the trunk of the elm. There was a blinding flash of rosy fire; the great tree appeared to shrink and dissolve, and presently the Prince stood before them.

"Welcome, Prince," said the enchanter. "Your enemy, the witch, will trouble you no more. I have turned her into an owl and given her to the Queen of Lantern Land. As for you," and here the enchanter turned fiercely upon the wood-cutter, "you shall be a green monkey, until you have planted and brought to full growth as many trees as you have cut down."

An instant later, a green monkey swung off into the tree-tops.

Then the grateful Prince thanked the King of the Trees, the mighty Gorbodoc, and the brave maiden, with all his heart. I am glad to say that he got his castle back again and married the maiden who had saved his life, and they lived happily ever after.

THE BIRD-BOY

LATE one autumn night a young queen stood by her window, gazing upon the silent and deserted meadows gleaming in the moonlight. Suddenly, far, far up in the sky, she heard the weird cry of birds flying southward, and lifting her eyes, the Queen beheld bird after bird fly across the golden shield of the moon.

"Oh, lovely, happy birds," said she; "would that I might have a son with wings!"

Now it came to pass that before the harvest moon rose again over the land, the Queen became the mother of a little boy who was born with wings on his shoulders. But instead of being pleased with so strange and wonderful a little son, the King (who was very superstitious and under the domination of a wicked chamberlain named Malefico) took it into his head that his wife was a sorceress, and gave orders that she should be imprisoned in a lonely tower and the child destroyed. So the

Every year, on the Bird-Boy's birthday, a great gray bird was seen.

Queen and her baby were taken to an old and gloomy tower on a great rock overlooking the northern sea; and after they had been there a day or two, the chief jailer came to the Queen's room to take the child and kill him.

The Queen, when she heard this terrible order, uttered a gasping scream, and seizing her little son from out his cradle, pressed him close to her breast. But although she fought for her baby with all her might, the rude strength of the jailers prevailed, and the child was torn from its mother's arms. Then, before any one could prevent her, the poor Queen beat open the rotted fastening of an old casement window, sprang upon the ledge, and giving one last look of love and tenderness to her unhappy child, leaped down into the sea surging and pounding over the rocks hundreds of feet below. She certainly would have been dashed to pieces, had not a good spirit of the ocean taken pity on her, and changed her into a great gray bird. Crying mournfully, the bird circled the

old tower thrice, and disappeared over the white-capped waters.

In spite of his roughness, however, the jailer was neither a brutal nor a wicked man, and he did not relish the cruel task which the King had given him. So, instead of killing the bird-boy, he carried him many leagues back into the dark forest which bordered the sea, and gave him to a family of charcoal-burners. With these rough, good people the bird-boy lived till he was five years old. And every year, on the boy's birthday, a great gray bird came flying over the forest from the distant ocean, circled thrice the charcoal-burners' hut, and disappeared again, crying mournfully.

One midsummer day, with a great deal of merry hallooing and blowing of sweet-voiced horns, the King of the country, accompanied by his young wife, came hunting through the wood. There was a pretty spring near the door of the hut, and the party came to a halt at its edge. Out ran the winged boy and his two

little foster-brothers, to see the wonderful sight. And a wonderful sight it was, indeed, to see the horses tossing their jeweled bridles, the hooded falcons riding on the saddlebow, clutching the leather with their curving claws, the merry young pages in their dark suits, and all the gay company in rich attire.

"Why, see," said the young Queen to her husband, "yon little boy hath wings. Really, dear, I must have him for my page. Would n't it be wonderful to have a winged page? Besides, he will be a playmate for Rosabella."

So the King gave the charcoal-burner and his wife fifty pieces of bright gold, which pleased them very much, and the charcoal-burner himself lifted the bird-boy up in his arms, and placed him on the King's saddle. Then the bird-boy waved good-bye to his two little ragged foster-brothers, who were howling as if their hearts would break, and rode away with the King. In a few hours the company came to a splendid castle of shining white stone,

standing in beautiful green gardens running down to the sea. Once at home, the Queen commanded that the little winged boy be washed and tidied, and his charcoal-burner's rags replaced with a pretty black velvet suit. You may be sure that, when the bird-boy was washed and dressed, there was no handsomer, more winning little boy in all the world.

So the bird-boy became the best beloved playmate of the Queen's only child, her darling Rosabella. Now, if the bird-boy was the prettiest little boy in all the world, Rosabella was the prettiest little girl. Moreover, she had a sweet disposition, which is a gift even more precious than the gift of beauty. It was a lovely picture to see the children building toy castles on the floor of the nursery in the castle tower, the sun streaming on the black-brown hair and silver white wings of the little boy, and on the golden curls of Rosabella.

Twelve years passed. The bird-boy grew into a handsome lad; Rosabella into the loveliest

of princesses. Twice had the bird-boy saved Rosabella's life. He had saved her the first time by swooping down and catching her in his wings just as she was about to tread on a wicked yellow viper; he had saved her in the same way when she had fallen over a cliff at the edge of the sea.

Every year, on the bird-boy's birthday, a great gray bird would fly in from over the sea, circle the castle thrice, and disappear, crying mournfully.

Now when the bird-boy and Rosabella were in their seventeenth year, it came to pass that the King was summoned to war. His enemy was no other than the wicked chamberlain Malefico, who had succeeded to the kingdom of the bird-boy's father, when that Prince had died some years before. So the good King, who had been a real father to the bird-boy, put on his shining armor, kissed his dear wife and child good-bye, and rode off to the battlefield. The bird-boy begged and pleaded to be taken

with him as his squire, but the King would not hear of it, and insisted that he remain in the castle to take care of the Queen and Rosabella. There was little cheer in the castle that unhappy evening. And all night long, the bird-boy thought he could hear the wings of a great bird beating fiercely against the window-panes.

A month passed, an unhappy month in which there were no tidings from the King. Then, one rainy morning, a messenger who had ridden so hard that his poor horse could scarcely stagger, rode to the castle gate bearing very evil news. A great battle had been fought, the army of Rosabella's father had been completely defeated, and the troops of the wicked Malefico were hurrying toward the castle as fast as they could come.

And so it was; for before the Queen had had time to summon the people and gather together a few belongings, the troops of the enemy burst in at the gate, and a dozen fierce soldiers surrounded the Queen, Rosabella, and

the bird-boy, and dragged them to Malefico.

When Malefico saw the bird-boy, a look of surprise appeared on his face, for he had believed that the wonderful child was dead. Then he fell to thinking, and as he thought, wicked purposes swept over his cruel face just as the shadows of dark clouds sweep over a gloomy pool.

"If it were known that the winged child is alive," he thought, "the people would thrust me from my place, and restore him to his father's throne. Now that the bird-boy is in my hands, I will destroy him, and be sure of my power."

So he smiled, and began to think of some manner in which he could bring the bird-boy to a shameful end. At last he hit upon a plan. He would declare that the bird-boy was not a human lad at all, but a witch-child; he would then accuse the good King of having protected a witch-child, and condemn them both to be stoned. So he threw the King and the

Queen, Rosabella and the bird-boy, into an old dungeon-tower, and went through the mockery of having a trial. When it was over, he sent a soldier to tell the King and the bird-boy that they were to be punished the following day.

And now dawned the unhappy day. The bird-boy took Rosabella's hand in his, and together they went to the barred window of the prison and looked out upon the world. The morning was fresh and fair; a pleasant south-west wind was blowing. The King and the bird-boy were to be led forth at noon. The clock marked a quarter to twelve.

"Dear Rosabella," said the bird-boy sadly, "we have forgotten that to-day is the day on which the great gray bird comes from the ocean and circles the castle towers. If thou shouldst see the bird when I am gone, greet it in my name, as we did when we were happy children."

"The bird may come," said Rosabella amid her sobs.

"No, Rosabella," said the bird-boy, "I shall never see the gray bird again. And even if it were to come, what could it do to save us from these cruel people?"

When the clock stood at five minutes to twelve, there was a confused noise below, and Malefico and the judges who shared with him the guilt of the unrighteous punishment took their places on a kind of platform which overlooked the place of execution.

"They will soon be coming to get us," said the King to the bird-boy.

And sure enough, they heard the jangle of the jailer's keys at the foot of the stair.

Suddenly the sunlight in the room faded swiftly into a strange gray gloom, and the bird-boy rushed to the window to see if a storm was at hand. A great shadowy cloud, advancing with inconceivable rapidity, already filled half the sky, and as the boy gazed into this cloud, he saw to his astonishment that it was not a cloud at all, but hundreds and hundreds

of thousands of great gray birds, flapping their long wings. The shadow of the birds fell over the platform on which the cruel Malefico sat waiting for the King and the bird-boy to be brought forth, and then ceased moving even as a ship that has come into harbor.

Far ahead of the vast swarm flew one lonely bird, and suddenly this bird uttered a shrill and piercing cry. Immediately every bird let fall a great beach-stone which he held in his claws, and for a long minute, the sky rained stones, round, polished stones that fell like bolts of thunder. When the storm was over, and the cloud had begun to break into rifts and speckles of light and flapping gray wings, the wicked Malefico and his cruel nobles lay buried forever beneath mound upon mound of stones. The doom which Malefico had intended for another had overtaken him.

The King and the Queen, Rosabella and the bird-boy, rushed down the stairs and out into the sunlight. As they did so, the gray bird

who had led the cloud, sank through the air and alighted at their feet. But scarcely had the bird's claws touched the ground, when there was a flash of flame, and the bird-boy's mother stood before them. She took her son in her arms, and told them all his history and her misfortunes, and how she had watched over him year after year and gathered the birds to save him.

Thus it came to pass that, when the troops of Malefico saw their former Queen and heard her story, they acclaimed the bird-boy as their rightful king, and carried him back in triumph into his own country. So the bird-boy became a king, married Rosabella, and lived happily ever after.

THE MASTER MARINER

Once upon a time a fine young fisherman rose early in the morning, and sailed alone to the fishing-grounds. There was very little wind, and beneath the speckled clouds and the cold, pearly light of the late dawn, the broad, low billows went slowly and unrippled to the land.

The fisherman cast anchor, and threw overboard his lines. Suddenly his boat moved uneasily, and close to its side the oily surface of the pale sea broke into a tumbling mass of foam. In the heart of the troubled waters, the fisherman beheld, to his great astonishment, a man clad in a strange garment of gleaming black scales, struggling with an enormous scarlet fish. A battle of life and death they fought, the man of the sea trying to stab the fish with a short dagger of shining steel, the fish trying, wolf-like, to tear at the body of its enemy. Now, with a swift lash of its bright scarlet body, the fish would rush at the man;

now, with a long sure stroke of his powerful arms, the man would escape the attack. Suddenly, the fish hurled itself clear out of the water, and falling against the man, struck him a terrible blow with its tail. Then the ocean man, who was stunned for a moment, would have perished, had not the young fisherman swiftly seized his spear and plunged deep into the body of the fish. Mortally wounded, the scarlet creature sank through the sunless waters, the dark blood flowing from its side.

The man of the sea clutched the rail of the boat with his webbed hands, and said to the fisherman, "I am the King of the Caves of the Sea. I owe you my life, and you shall have a reward. Take this little silver fish. It will bring you good fortune; and should you ever be in deadly peril, you have but to cast it into the sea, and it will come and find me."

The fisherman thanked the King of the Caves, and took the silver fish. It was about the length of your little finger, and had pale moon-

stones for eyes. The fisherman hung the talisman on a chain and wore it round his neck.

From that morning on, everything prospered with the youth. His boat never leaked, he was never caught in a storm, and the fish came to his lines and nets the instant he threw them overboard. Within a year or two he had grown so rich that he was able to buy the finest merchant ship in the world, and became a master mariner. Surely no more splendid fellow than this gallant, young captain was ever found on the Seven Seas. He sailed to cold and foggy Flannel Land, where the inhabitants all have incurable head colds, and have no other cloth but red flannel; he traded in the ports of gorgeous Velvet Land, whose inhabitants dress in velvet, and cover their walls with velvet hangings and their floors with velvet rugs.

One pleasant morning, running before a fine westerly breeze, he came to the Eastern Islands. Down the street of the bazaar walked the Master Mariner, followed by those who had

articles to sell. Some showed him bright-colored birds which they had caught in the forests; others waved squares of figured cloth and called upon him to buy them; others still offered strange flasks and bottles of brass and gleaming copper. At the end of the street, the Master Mariner discovered a little quiet counter on which lay some dozens of puffy and distended brown-leather bags.

"What are these?" said the Master Mariner to a tall, lean man with beady, brown eyes who was in charge of the shop.

"These are breezes, Master Captain," replied the shopman. "If you are going south, here is a bag of a very reliable northwest wind" (he picked up one of the brown bags); "if you are going east, here are some of the best-assorted westerly gusts. I am selling them at a very low price to-day, in fact at less than they cost me. What will you have?"

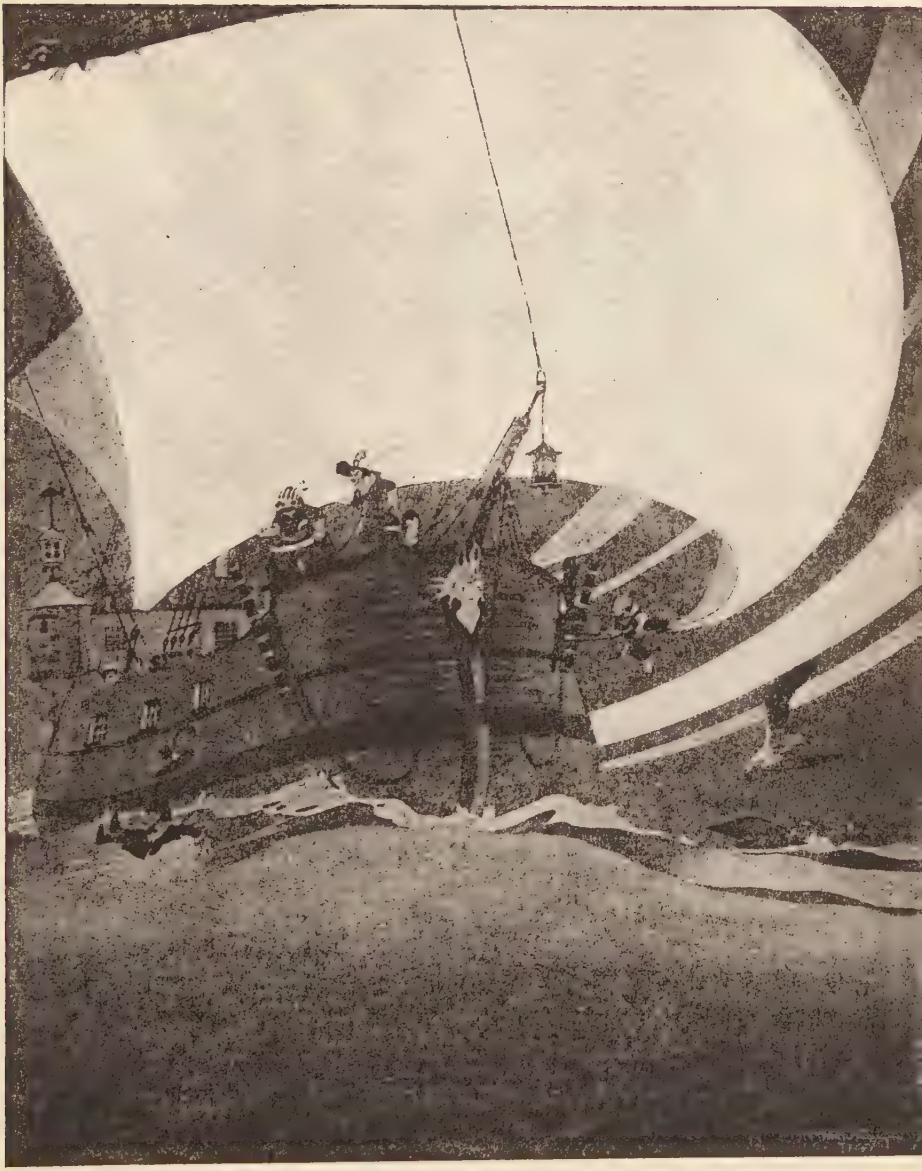
"I'll have a smart easterly," replied the Master Mariner.

He put down fifty gold pieces on the counter, took the bag which the shopman gave him, and walked away.

Now all these leather bags looked very much alike, and instead of selling the Master Mariner a brisk easterly breeze, the shopman had made an error, and sold him a frightful storm.

Again the Master Mariner went to sea; but luckily for him, he put the imprisoned storm away in a locker, intending to use it on some other voyage. Presently he came to Silk Land, loveliest of all the Cloth Islands. There the inhabitants dress only in the finest of silks; the roofs and walls are covered with layers of silk; the sun always shines, and pretty birds with silken plumage chatter in the fern-like trees.

Now the island of Silk Land was at this time ruled by the prettiest of princesses. She was about eighteen years old; she was tall for her age, and her eyes were quite the loveliest shade of brown. When the Master Mariner's fine



Splash! and the Master Mariner fell into the sea.

ship came into the harbor of Silk Land, cleaving the turquoise water, and with the bright sun shining on her silvery-white sails, the Princess happened to be resting under a silken awning on the roof of her palace. Catching sight of the ship, the Princess cried to her companions:—

"See what a fine ship is coming into port! She must be laden with many wonderful things. Send word to the Captain that I intend to visit her to-morrow morning."

The next morning, sure enough, the Princess paid a visit to the ship, which lay at a wharf below the palace. In honor of the Princess's coming, everything had been swept, scrubbed, and brightened, and gorgeous carpets from the Eastern Islands covered the decks. In shaded nooks, under costly tapestries, lay the treasures of the cargo — wonderful cloths and spices from the Eastern Islands, vessels of gold and silver from the Adamant Mountains, and jewels from the Desert of the Moon.

Now scarcely had the Master Mariner set eyes on the Princess, than he began to think her quite the most wonderful person he ever had beheld; as for the Princess, scarcely had the Master Mariner directed two or three respectful and somewhat tender glances in her direction, than she began to believe him quite the most gallant youth she had ever seen. She gave orders that several of the marvels be brought to her palace, and was looking about for something else, when her eyes chanced to fall upon the silver fish the Master Mariner was wearing.

"Pray, what is that little silver fish?" asked the Princess.

"A mere trifle which a friend once gave me," replied the Master Mariner, reading in the Princess's eyes and demeanor that she desired the talisman. "If Your Majesty will only deign to accept it, it is yours."

And blinded by the Princess's eyes, he gallantly, but somewhat incautiously, took the

silver fish from its chain and gave it to the Princess, who laughed prettily, and accepted the gift.

Silver trumpets sounded, the servitors gathered up the treasures which the Princess had chosen, and the royal party returned to the palace with a good deal of chattering and laughter.

In a few days, the Master Mariner disposed of his cargo, and went again to sea. But wherever he went, the image of the beautiful Princess of Silk Land went with him.

Under the silken awning, on the wind-swept balcony, sat the Princess, and the image of the young Captain was often in her mind.

After three months had passed, the Princess took it into her head that it was time for the Master Mariner to return to Silk Land, and gave orders that a sharp watch be kept from the tower of the palace for his returning vessel. One morning, just as the Princess was having breakfast in her wonderful silken bed, news was

brought to her that a large ship was headed for the harbor.

"Is it the Master Mariner's ship?" asked the Princess.

"I do not know, Your Majesty," replied the messenger. "The vessel is still many miles out to sea."

So the Princess jumped out of bed, and without waiting for the ladies of the bedchamber to dress her, ran upstairs to her balcony. A great ship was coming in under a favoring breeze. Nearer and nearer it came, till the Princess could even distinguish the men aboard. Suddenly she uttered a little scream, and ran down stairs pell-mell. At the same moment the bells of Silk Land all began to ring wildly, and the beating of drums sounded through the town.

The approaching ship was a pirate ship! From the topmast flew the terrible black flag of the pirates of the Northern Isles!

Great confusion followed.

Warned by the uproar of the bells and drums,

the people came scurrying through the streets to the palace; some carrying children in their arms; others the best beloved of their household furnishings. The palace was hastily made ready for a siege.

Soon, cursing and swearing, the black-bearded pirates arrived, and began to sack the town. Into every house they went, pulling out all the bureau drawers, reading private letters, upsetting the clocks, and leaving the water running in the kitchen sinks. They filled their pockets with cuff-links and watches.

Now, if the pirates had taken only the cuff-links, stick-pins, cameo brooches, silver candlesticks, souvenir spoons, and sugar-tongs, and then gone away, the raid would not have been too terrible; but the rogues, bribed by the horrid old King of the Oyster Mountains, a rejected suitor, were bent on getting possession of the Princess. On discovering that she had locked herself up in the strong palace, their rage knew no bounds. They made a dozen

different attempts to break open the palace door, but all in vain. Finally, they decided to besiege the fortress.

For four days all went well enough with the Princess and her imprisoned people; but by the sixth day most of the food had been eaten; and by the end of the eighth day, the Princess knew she would have to surrender the following morning. With a sinking heart she went to a turret and looked out over the ocean in the hope of catching sight of a passing sail. But she saw only the deserted town and the pirate ship riding at anchor in the bay. An hour later she went to the turret again, and again she saw no sign of anything at sea. A terrible despair seized upon her, but nevertheless once more to the turret she climbed.

Far out at sea, headed toward land, was the brave ship of the Master Mariner!

So great was the joy of the poor Princess at the sight of the gallant vessel that she almost swooned; but recovering herself, like the Prin-

cess that she was, she ran down into the courtyard and told the news to her people. Immediately those who were weak or fretful from hunger began to take heart, and all who could crowded to the barred windows.

The Master Mariner's vessel came riding into the port; the watchers saw her drop anchor, saw the boats being lowered, and the sailors coming ashore. Soon the pirates and the sailors were at it hammer and tongs; a ceaseless *clack clack* of steel beating upon steel rose to the turrets of the palace; there were dreadful duels in the alleyways and battles in the public squares. Alas! just as the sailors were carrying the day, the Master Mariner received a blow on the head which knocked him insensible, and the mariners, disorganized by the loss of their chief, were soon surrounded and taken prisoners. Then, taking heart, the pirates rushed the palace, and burst open the doors.

When the rogues had taken everything on which they could lay their hands, they brought

the prisoners and the plunder to the market-place.

"Shall we bind all these people and take them aboard?" asked a pirate.

"No!" roared the one-eyed pirate chief. "Take only the Princess and that rogue of a Master Mariner."

The people now began to cry, "Oh, don't take the Princess, our dear Princess!" But all their prayers were useless.

Now, because the Master Mariner's ship was far more swift and beautiful than the pirate ship, the pirates, after setting fire to their own vessel, abandoned her, and put their plunder on board the Master Mariner's vessel. The following morning, leaving the people of Silk Land robbed and mourning, the pirates sailed away.

Within a few hours, all signs of land had disappeared. The sea was as black as ink. Against the horizon's edge, the great waves were leaping and breaking into foam.

"Bring me the list of booty!" cried the pirate captain, roaring the last word.

So the pirate treasurer came on deck, and read a long list beginning,—

"Fifty-three scarf-pins."

"Hooray!" shouted the pirate crew.

"A hundred and eighty-five sterling silver berry-spoons," next announced the treasurer.

"Hooray!" cried the crew again.

"One thousand clocks!" cried the treasurer.

"How many with alarms?" asked an old pirate anxiously.

There was a strained silence. The treasurer consulted his list.

"Seven hundred and forty-nine," he answered.

"Hooray!" yelled the pirate crew.

When the list had been read (it took very nearly half an hour to do it) the one-eyed captain cried, "Bring forth the Master Mariner!"

So the Master Mariner was brought forth, and thrown brutally against a mast. The pirate chief put his arms akimbo, cleared his

throat savagely, and roared, "So you thought you were going to punish *me*, did you! Well, I'll show you what happens to people who upset my plans. Here, Hawk Eye, and you, Toby, throw this fellow overboard."

Hearing this awful order, the Princess screamed and would have run to the Master Mariner, had not rude hands restrained her.

Splash! the Mariner fell into the inky sea. Swift as a bird, his own ship went by him; he saw the mocking face of the pirate chief leering at him from over the rail; in a few minutes he was alone, all, all alone in the wide, wide sea. For some time he swam about, and by great good luck discovered a log of wood strong enough to bear his weight, floating near at hand. Upon this he climbed, and there we shall leave him for the present.

When the Captain had disappeared from sight miles behind, the pirate chief walked over to the Princess, and looking at her, said sneeringly, "Well, my beauty, are you going to

make up your mind to be the wife of the King of the Oyster Mountains? I'm taking you to him, and mind now, no fooling!"

The Princess shrank from him with horror, and as she fell back, the sun gleamed on the silver fish she was wearing at her throat. The chief made a rude snatch at it; the Princess, however, was quicker than he, and hit him a good box on the ear.

"Ow!" cried the chief, dancing up and down with rage. "I'll fix you, you ill-tempered minx. Here, somebody, tie this girl to the mast for the rest of the day, and give her nothing but bread and water."

In obedience to his order, the Princess, with her arms tied by the wrists behind her back, was lashed to the mast. When she had been securely bound, the chief, whose ear was still tingling, took the silver fish. He was looking at it when he saw something which made him drop the fish on the deck.

Out of the forecastle door thick clouds of

black mist were rolling, exactly as if the hold of the ship were on fire. For a meddlesome pirate had found the leather bag of storm-wind and had opened it, mistaking it for a bag of wine.

The strange clouds, swirling round the deck, grew instant by instant darker and denser. Soon the tops of the masts could no longer be distinguished. The sun took on a horrible copper hue, and the sea became a mottled black and green. A howling wind arose.

A moment later, with the violence of an explosion, the storm burst. Mountain-high rose the glassy white-capped waves. The lightning fell in violet cataracts, and thunder roared and tumbled through the caverns of the sky. An ocean of hissing rain fell into the waters.

Suddenly the pirate chief, as he staggered down the stairs, shouted, "We are lost!"

Just astern, an enormous, glassy wave, higher than the masts of the ship, was about to break. The pirates yelled, but little good their

yelling did them. An instant later the wave broke upon the deck, and crashing tons of green water swept every single pirate into the sea. Slowly, and with the tense struggle of a wounded animal, the good ship lifted itself from the waves.

The Princess was the only human being left on board. Only the cords which bound her to the mast had saved her from being swept away.

Now, when the water swept the deck, the silver fish which lay at the Princess's feet became alive and darted over the rail into the sea.

The storm continued. The helpless Princess expected every minute to sink with the ship into the roaring waters. Suddenly, to her horror, a high rocky island appeared a few miles ahead. Toward this island, over whose cruel reefs the ocean was foaming and breaking, the ship was drifting fast. Tied to the mast, the Princess listened to the terrible cry of the breakers, and, spell-bound, watched the jagged rocks of the island ever drawing nearer.

Now while the Princess was in this terrible situation, the Master Mariner, who had been blown before the storm like a feather, also came in sight of the rocky island. The instant he caught sight of the shore, and heard the roaring of the breakers, he knew that he could not hope to reach the land. He was on the edge of the reefs when the King of the Caves of the Sea, who had been summoned by the silver fish, rose out of the water beside him, and taking him in his webbed hands, swam with him to a place of safety. Just as they reached the shallows, the mists of the tempest parted, and driving through the darkness and the storm, headed for the reefs, came the Master Mariner's ship with the Princess tied to the mast.

"Oh, save her! Save the Princess!" cried the Master Mariner.

The King of the Caves of the Sea stretched out his hands over the island and uttered a strange and mysterious word. So awful was its power

that the rocky cliffs split open, forming a safe and sheltered harbor. Into this port came the ship, safe at last as a bird in its nest.

So the Master Mariner, the Princess, and the ship were all wonderfully preserved, and when the storm was over, the King of the Caves saw them home to Silk Land. There the Master Mariner found his crew waiting for him, and in a few days they had rigged new sails for the ship which were even whiter than the old. The inhabitants got back the fifty-three scarf pins, the hundred and eighty-five sterling silver berry-spoons, the thousand clocks, and the rest of the booty which the pirates had stowed away in the Master Mariner's ship.

Great was the rejoicing.

Greater still was the joy, however, when the Master Mariner married the Princess.

THE MARVELOUS DOG AND THE WONDERFUL CAT

Once upon a time there was an old enchanter who taught magic and enchantment to the younger fairies. Year after year, and morning after morning, he was to be found at his schoolroom in the Fairies' College, standing between

his desk and a blackboard, now writing down the spell for turning noses into turnips, now changing sunflower seeds into pearls before the very eyes of his pupils.

The old enchanter liked this life of quiet and study, and doubtless would have been teaching in Fairyland to this very day, had he not been so unfortunate as to quarrel with the terrible sorcerer Zidoc, who was then Lord High Chancellor of the Fairies' College. I have forgotten exactly what the quarrel was about, but I think that it had to do with the best spell for causing castles to fall to pieces in an instant. At any rate, Zidoc, who considered himself quite the most wonderful enchanter in Fairyland, was furious at being opposed, and told the old enchanter, very angrily, that he was not to have his classes any more and must leave the college at once. So the poor old gentleman packed up his magic books, put his enchanter's wand into its silver case, and went to the country one pleasant day in search of a house.

Thanks to the advice of a friendly chimney swift, it did not take him long to find one. The dwelling was the property of the Fairy Jocapa. It stood just off the high road, close by a lane of great oaks whose shiny, fringed leaves glistened in the hot noon-day sun; it had a high roof with sides steep as mountain slopes, and one great chimney; and its second story thrust itself out over the first in the old-fashioned way. Green fields, little hills, and pleasant meadows in which red and white cows were grazing lay behind the dwelling.

Seeing the front door wide open, the enchanter walked in. It was very quiet. Only the far away *klingle-klangle* of a cow-bell could be heard.

"Here shall I live," said the enchanter. And he brought his possessions to the house.

Now, one autumnal morning, when a blue haze hung over the lonely fields from which the reapers had departed, and the golden leaves were wet underfoot, the old enchanter went for

a walk down the lane, and finding the day agreeable, kept on until he found himself in the woods. Arriving at the crest of a little hill in the woodland, he saw below him, almost at the foot of the slope, a countryman with a white puppy and a black kitten following at his heels. The little dog barked merrily out of pure high spirits, whilst the kitten leaped and struck with its tiny paws at the passing white butterflies.

As the old enchanter approached the countryman, he happened to hear him say to the animals,—

"Alas, my poor innocents, what a pity that I should have to abandon you!"

"What's that?" said the enchanter, halting the countryman. "You intend to abandon these helpless creatures?"

"Alas, I must," replied the countryman, pulling a large blue bandanna handkerchief from his pocket and applying it to the corners of his eyes. "We are too poor to be able to feed

them, and my children love them so well that I cannot find it in my heart to do them harm. I am taking them into these woods to abandon them, in the hope that, like the wild animals, they will soon learn to shift for themselves."

"Give them to me," said the old enchanter, "I will bring them up." The countryman nodded his head. "As for you, here is a golden florin. May it bring you better fortune."

Thus did the white puppy and black kitten change hands.

Once he had led the animals safely home, the enchanter resolved to make them the most wonderful animals that had ever been seen in the whole wide world, whether in Fairyland or out of it. Being an enchanter, he could, of course, do this more easily than other people. So he taught the cat and the dog all the known languages, then history, arithmetic, dancing, social deportment, and a variety of the best magic and spells. The cat, as was to be expected, was particularly good on anything that

had 'cat' in it; he once catalogued all the principal catastrophes; while the dog, although a good student, had a fancy for writing doggerel. Many and many a time, when the enchanter and his wonderful animals were seated in their armchairs round a blazing fire, talking exactly as any three good friends might talk, a nose would flatten itself against the panes, and the three companions would see looking in at them some stranger whose curiosity had got the better of his manners.

The dog, I may say, had grown up to be a fine fellow of the short-haired, white bull terrier family; the cat had grown to be as aristocratic as a panther. When their education was complete, the animals came to their teacher and begged him to let them go away and see the world. For a long time the enchanter, who loved his charges very much indeed, resisted their request; but as they continued to press him, he came at length to yield. Calling them before him, he said to them:—

"Well, dear pupils, if you must go, you must go. I owe the Fairy Jocapa twelve months rent for this house. She is now living with her nephew, the King of the Land of the Runaway Rivers. You shall take twelve golden florins to her. Your route will take you over all the kingdoms of the whole wide world."

So the white dog, who was the stronger of the two, took the purse with the twelve golden coins, and put it in a large wallet which he wore at his side, and then both the wonderful animals said good-bye. At the corner of the lane they turned again to look for the last time at their dwelling, and saw their old master still waving at them from the little window over the door. Then they fared over the hills and far away.

So wise, so well-bred and good-tempered were these wonderful animals, that their journey across the world was a great success from the beginning. Their fame spread from kingdom to kingdom like wild-fire. The universities,

colleges, and other learned societies fought with each other for the privilege of entertaining these distinguished students. To this very day, the address which the cat made on *catapults* and *cataplasms*, before the professors of the University of Sagessa, is remembered as one of the great events of the time; while the dog's address on *dogma* before the assembled scholars of the Royal Academy of Fairyland was printed in a special book bound in gold leaf and walpus leather. Both the cat and the dog were awarded countless honorary decorations.

And so, little by little, they came to a hilly land in which all the streams raced pell-mell to the sea, and there they knew themselves to be in the Kingdom of the Runaway Rivers. A three days' journey brought them to the royal castle. Arriving in the twilight, they were somewhat surprised to find a number of torch-bearers waiting for them in the castle court-yard. With great respect, these attendants conducted the cat and the dog into a little ante-

room, and then retired, leaving them alone. A few minutes later, a very old woman, who, the animals noticed, was stone-blind, came to take them before the king.

"How strange!" whispered the cat in its rather *meouw-y* voice.

"Very," whispered back the dog in his deeper tone.

Having opened, one after the other, three great doors with three different iron keys, the old woman, guiding herself by touching the wall with her hand, led the animals into a long dark corridor. The cat, who could see quite well in the dark, did not mind this, but the dog was not particularly pleased. The echoes of the old woman's boots went rolling along in the hollow darkness; the dog could hear his heart beat, and saw his black companion's eyes glowing like pools of flame. Then, to their mutual relief, the animals saw a point of light appearing far down the passage, and on reaching this, they discovered a second blind old

woman holding a torch. The first old woman beckoned them to follow this new guide, and disappeared again into the dark corridors by which they had arrived.

The second old woman, lifting high the torch, first led her charges through three more great doors, all of which she carefully locked behind her. Soon the animals found themselves at the top of a winding stair whose end was lost in darkness. Down this stair they went, turning, ever turning, down and round, down and round, till both cat and dog felt dizzily that they must have reached the heart of the earth. Then, little by little, a pin-point of light began to glow brighter and brighter, and the animals found themselves at the foot of the stairs and opposite a little door. And there, by this door, stood another blind old woman, who held a torch and beckoned to the animals to follow.

Three more doors they passed, the last one opening on a very narrow, winding passage. In and out they turned, walking one behind the

other, for a time that seemed very, very long. Suddenly a narrow door appeared in the winding wall, which opened inward as they drew near, revealing a beautiful round chamber richly furnished and hung with the finest tapestries. Beside the fireplace, in which a wood-fire was cheerily burning, sat a gray-haired lady, who was no other than the Fairy Jocapa, and in the centre of the room, reading a great book by the light of many candles, sat a young man, the King.

In spite of the enchanter's careful training in manners, the cat and the dog, I am sorry to say, almost stared for an instant at the King. Small wonder that they did so, for the unfortunate young man lay under a horrid spell, and his face and hands were not pink or white or sun-brown, like yours or mine, but *bright green*, like a parrot's wing!

"Welcome, O wonderful animals," said the enchanted King. "Your fame has gone before you into every land, and it is said that there is

no question you cannot answer. Listen, then, to my story and help me if you can.

"You see me before you, hideously changed. Until you entered here, an instant past, no eyes but those of my aunt had beheld my horrible countenance. It was she who caused this enchanted chamber to appear in the heart of the foundations of my castle; and in this chamber I have hidden since that terrible hour when the spell was put upon me. My subjects only know that I am still alive. The Lord Chancellor rules the kingdom in my stead. But hearken to my story.

"Ten months ago, as I was driving my chariot down a narrow road built along a river-bank close to the stream, I encountered a chariot being driven furiously in the opposite direction. The driver of the chariot was a tall, elderly man, wearing a wizard's cap; his face was red as with anger, an evil light gleamed in his small malicious eyes. In order to let him pass, I turned to one side, as near to the river-brink as

I dared; but the space was too narrow, our chariots locked wheels, and his was overthrown. Turning upon me a face aflame with hatred, he cried out, 'I will teach you what it is to offend the Enchanter Zidoc'; and an instant later the wizard himself, the struggling horses, and the overturned chariot disappeared in a rumble of thunder and a great flash of flame. "I turned homeward, never noticing that anything had happened to me. As I chanced to pass a roadside cottage, a little child playing about saw me and ran, screaming for fear, to the door. A little farther on, I stopped to drink of a spring. Judge of my horror when I leaned over the clear pool of water and saw that my face had turned a bright green! I waited till nightfall, stole into the castle unobserved, and sought the aid of my aunt, the fairy. You know the rest. Speak, O wonderful dog and wonderful cat, and bid me hope a little!"

And the poor King hid his bright green face in his hands.

"The Enchanter Zidoc is an old enemy of our dear master," said the white dog, "and his power as a sorcerer is the greatest in Fairyland."

"I have tried all my powers against him in vain," said the Fairy Jocapa, sadly.

"But let us not despair," broke in the cat. "Zidoc is now to be found in these dominions. His castle lies on the border of the Silver Hills. The dog and I will go there, and see if we can help the King."

So the Fairy and the unhappy King thanked the wise animals, and sent for the blind old women to lead them back to the upper world. Early next morning, the famous pair began the journey to the Enchanter's den. The dog's plan was to pretend to be but an everyday stray dog, and to this end, he rolled several times in a mud-puddle; the cat, too, was to appear as a stray cat, and neglected his fine black coat in order to look the part.

Unfortunately for their plan, Zidoc had in

his chamber a little enchanted bell which rang shrilly when danger threatened him. Hearing the bell ring late at night, Zidoc rose from his bed, and hurrying to the turret window, saw, by the light of the waning moon, the dog and the cat making their way to the castle through the wood. Rubbing his hands with glee, he determined to let the two animals walk headlong into his power, and then inflict upon them some terrible revenge.

The first day the dog went indoors, and concealed himself under a sofa, while the cat remained outside. When twilight came, the dog ran out and met the cat in the castle garden.

"Did you discover anything?" asked the cat.

"Nothing whatever," replied the dog.

"I will try to-morrow," said the cat.

And so, when the morning came, the dog remained outside while the cat concealed himself behind a curtain. When the twilight came, the animals met again.

"Did you discover anything?" asked the dog.

"Very little," replied the cat. "The Sorcerer Serponel is coming to-morrow to pay Zidoc a visit. One of us must hide in the room in which they will talk; for perhaps we may learn something which may help us to lift the spell from the King."

"To-morrow it is my turn," said the dog. And so the next morning he stole into the house and hid again beneath the sofa.

Now Zidoc knew very well where the dog had concealed himself. Moreover, he had summoned the powerful Serponel to his aid in order that the dog and the cat should have no opportunity to escape.

When Serponel arrived, both the wicked enchanters went to the room in which the dog lay concealed. First, Zidoc locked the only door with a great key and then he said to Serponel,—

"Brother, someone tells me that there is an enemy hidden under the sofa."

"Yes, brother," replied the dreadful Serponel.

"And something tells me that it is time to let him feel your staff."

Now Zidoc had an enchanted staff whose blows were mortal, and knowing this, the poor dog, who was trapped between the wall and the two sorcerers, grew cold with fear to the tip of his white tail. Just as he was about to make a bolt into the open, Zidoc dragged the sofa swiftly aside, and aimed a terrible blow at him, which by the greatest good luck just missed its mark. He then ran out into the room, pursued by the sorcerers, who little by little forced him toward a corner.

And now, just as Zidoc, holding the staff uplifted, was about to strike the poor dog with all his force, a black shape, with flaming eyes and paws outstretched to scratch, leaped through the open window and landed upon Zidoc's back. It was the brave cat, who had heard the fracas from his hiding-place below and had clawed his way up the castle wall to help his friend. Valiant Puss, forgetting in one instant, I must

admit, all its knowledge of languages, catastrophes, history, social deportment, and agriculture, plunged instantly into the fray, and gave Zidoc a frightful scratch, which so upset him that it caused him to drop his staff, while the dog profiting by the confusion, and forgetting all about geometry, mathematics, agriculture, and dogma, managed to give Serponel a good bite just above the ankle.

The wily Zidoc, however, was not to be so easily thwarted. Uttering a magic word, he caused the room to be filled with darkness, and in the cover of this darkness he transformed himself instantly into a black cat exactly like the learned cat, while Serponel changed himself into a white dog exactly like the learned dog. At the same moment he caused the locked door to fly open.

"Now," thought he, "I will cause the cat to follow the wrong white dog, and the dog to follow the wrong cat; we shall thus separate the animals, and when we have lured them

far away from each other, Serponel and I will resume our true forms, and destroy these meddlesome creatures."

When the darkness cleared, the hearts of the true animals fell for fear lest the sorcerer's ruse be successful; but they met the challenge readily, and instead of fleeing, stood their ground; the true dog battling with the false dog, the real cat with the false cat. Never was such a hullaballoo heard in Fairyland. Then, seeing that he was in danger of being badly scratched, Zidoc brought on another darkness, the floor of the castle shook, a noise as of thunder roared and rattled through the room. When the darkness ended, both the enchanters had been separated and the cats were confused, *the real dog was chasing the real cat, thinking that he was following Zidoc, while Serponel, who had been the false white dog, was pursuing Zidoc, who had been the false black cat!* Down the stairs, over the terraces and the gardens ran the true dog, pursuing the true cat, while in-

doors, up and down through the rooms and over the furniture, raced the false animals.

The poor cat, thinking he was being pursued by the wrong dog, grew short of breath, and, hearing the snapping at his heels, ran up a convenient tree. Hardly had he reached a point above the dog's jaws when a voice said:—

"Why, my pupils, my pupils! What a way to behave! Stop your quarreling this instant!"

The animals turned to look, and saw their master, the old enchanter. He had been worried by their long absence and had gone forth to look for them. Thus, at the same moment that the poor dog saw that he had been pursuing his friend, the cat saw that he had been escaping from his comrade.

Suddenly a noise from the castle arrested their attention, and on looking up, all saw through the windows the false dog pursuing the false cat down the hall of state.

Now, if you remember the first part of this story, you will recall that Zidoc quarreled with

the old enchanter over the right spell for destroying castles. A triumphant smile shone on the lips of the old teacher; he stretched forth his hand toward the castle and uttered a magic word.

There was a roar as of twenty thousand cataracts, and in the twinkling of an eye, the castle collapsed in a cloud of dust, burying the two wicked magicians in its ruins.

"There, I told him so!" said the old enchanter.

When the dog and the cat had recovered from the events of the day, the three friends began their journey back to the palace of the enchanted King. He came to the castle gate to meet them, for Zidoc's overthrow had broken the spell which had so oddly disfigured him. Through the open doors, a splendid banquet could be seen waiting, and the sound of music was heard.

So the old enchanter gave his arm to the Fairy Jocapa, the Prince gave his to the white dog,

and the cat followed all by himself. Then came the host of rejoicing courtiers.

When the festival was over, the enchanter and the wonderful animals went back, loaded with royal gifts, to their own little house and lived happily there to a good old age.

THE SHEPHERD OF CLOUDS

Once upon a time a young husband and wife named Giles and Phyllida lived in a cottage in the heart of a great plain. League upon league, the rich land fell away to the west, there to end at a wall of high mountains into whose fastnesses no one had ever ventured. Yet the mountains were very beautiful. In the cold of

a clear winter's day, the snowy summits and rust-colored pinnacles shone bright and near at hand; in the spring, fogs hid them, and lay like gray mantles upon the lower slopes. Midway in the mountain wall, a wide chasm marked the entrance to a deep, gloomy valley, out of which a roaring mountain torrent hurried, to lose itself in the plain below. And because somewhere in the heart of this dark valley storms were brewed, whose dark clouds, laden with lightning and hail, poured from between the crags of the valley out over the land, this valley was known as the Valley of Thunder. According to an old legend, out of this valley a king should one day come to rule over the people of the plain.

Giles and Phyllida kept house by themselves. They had two cows, one red and white, the other black and white, a flock of hens, some hives of bees, a white horse, a dog, and a cat. All day long Phyllida worked happily at the household tasks, baking the sweet white bread

and marking the fresh golden butter into square pats, while Giles went out to work in the waving grain; and Phyllida, watching from a window, would see the sun flash on the uplifted blade of her husband's scythe.

One day Phyllida said to Giles:—

"I have made a dress for the youngest child of our cousins, Jack and Jill, and this morning I shall saddle the white horse and ride over to their cottage. Perhaps I may stay with them for a few days. You will find a fresh baking of bread and a meat-pie in the larder. Good-bye, Giles; I'll soon be home again."

So Giles answered, "Good-bye," and away rode Phyllida on the white horse.

A few days passed, and Giles, wandering here and there through the quiet house, felt very lonely indeed. Finally he could stand it no longer, and said to himself, "Phyllida must be on her way home now; I shall walk down the highway and meet her."

So he turned all the animals loose in the

fields, and putting a few slices of bread and cheese in his pockets, set forth upon the road. Leagues ahead of him stood the mysterious mountains rising palely through the haze of the midsummer afternoon. A pale violet light fell on their distant precipices, and the snow in the rifts upon their sides appeared of the purest and loveliest white. Gusts of wind hurrying from the distant summits swept the great plain, and the fields of ripening wheat bent before them and rustled harshly.

Suddenly, down the throat of the Thunder Valley, Giles saw a river of lightning fall, and from far away came a low murmur of thunder. Then, faster and faster, a storm poured down the chasm like a flood, drowning out the light of the sun, stilling the songs of the little birds, and turning to the sky the pale underside of the leaves of the roadside trees. A darkness as of night itself covered the land. Rain began to fall in great spattering drops. Now, by the glare of the lightning, Giles would see the end-

less fields, drenched and waving in the rain; now the Thunder Valley itself, covered with a floor of onrushing cloud unfolding, turning, and sinking in continuous and multitudinous activity.

Night came on amid the storm, and a flash of lightning revealed to Giles that he had lost his way. Hoping to find a shelter or some friendly cottage, however, he plunged on; but the road became worse and worse, and he was again and again forced to wade brooks flooded by the tempest. At length his steps led him into a pine wood, and there in the thickest part he found a little shelter, and fell asleep.

When he woke, numb, cramped, and cold, he found to his horror that in the night and darkness he had blundered on into the Valley of Thunder, into which no living soul had ever before advanced. Worst of all, he could not find the way by which he had entered, for high crags rose on every side and held him prisoner. Presently, to his amazement, he beheld a nar-

row flight of steps cut in the solid rock of the mountainside. Up these steps climbed Giles, and as he mounted higher, the stairs began to twist and turn amid the crags and pinnacles. At the end of an hour's ascent, he found himself at a turn from which the Thunder Valley, the chasm through which it opened into the plain, and the wide plain itself, could all be seen.

Giles lingered there a while, trying to see his own cottage, or perhaps Phyllida on her white horse; but he could see neither one nor the other. So he began to climb again. All day long he climbed and climbed and climbed. Twilight fell. The circle of the sun dropped below the level horizon of the distant fields. One still golden star hung on the fringe of the sun-glow. The stairs began to widen, and presently Giles found himself at the summit of the mountain. Before his eyes lay a little level field surrounded by strange crags and pinnacles, looming tall and black against the fast-

appearing stars, and as Giles rubbed his eyes in wonder, lights shone here and there in the sides of the towering rocks, even as lights shine in the windows of a village when you see it from afar.

Giles rubbed his eyes again. Lights? What could they mean? Presently a great door, cut in the side of a towering mass of stone, opened with a burst of light, and toward Giles there hurried the two strangest creatures whom he had ever seen. These were two elves, alike as two peas and each about three feet tall. Instead of having ears much like other elves, however, the first one had ears like great curved cornucopias, which projected almost a foot on each side of his enormous round head, while the other, whose ears were quite natural, had but one huge eye in the centre of his forehead.

Without saying a single word, these strange elves seized Giles by the hands, and after hurrying him across the open space, urged him

through the open doors into the house in the crags.

Still keeping silence, the elves led Giles through hundreds of splendid rooms and great halls, all lighted by hanging lamps as countless in number as the leaves upon the trees. Suddenly, a great archway rose before them, through which appeared a hall larger and brighter than all the others seen before. At one end of it, under a canopy of rosy-gray, stood a golden throne, and on the throne sat a being dressed in radiant blue—in blue such as the sky wears after a rain, when the dark clouds with bright edges break asunder and reveal the glory overhead. At the same moment, the countless mountain elves gathered in the hall began to sing:—

"All Hail, All Hail to the Shepherd of Clouds,
Who, high in his mountain-top, rules o'er the weather;
He sends the rich rain over mountain and plain,
And sprinkles the dew-drops afar o'er the heather."

The elves led Giles before the Shepherd.

"How comest thou, mortal, to invade my mountain?" said the Shepherd.

"I went forth to seek Phyllida," said Giles, "and lost my way in the storm."

"What sayest thou, Eye-o?" said the Shepherd to the elf with the single great eye in his forehead.

"The mortal speaks the truth," answered Eye-o in the queerest, squealiest voice. "I saw him set out yesterday from his cottage on the plain. He had not gone far when the storm which Your Mightiness prepared in the morning and sent forth in the afternoon overtook him. He lost his way, and chance led him to your dwelling, O Shepherd of Clouds."

"What sayest thou, Ear-o?" said the Shepherd to the elf with the great ears.

"I heard him say good-bye to his wife Wednesday last," replied the elf in a voice exactly like that of his brother. "Phyllida said to him, 'You will find a fresh baking of bread and a meat-pie in the larder.'"

The Shepherd of Clouds fixed his deep, solemn gaze upon Giles and said:—

"Mortal, I have hearkened to your story and to the words of my faithful Eye-o, who sees all things that happen in the whole wide world; I have paid heed to the words of Ear-o, who hears all things that are to be heard under the sun. Chance has led you to discover the secret of the weather. Nevermore must you revisit the lower world. Here shall you stay till Death overtakes you. Obey me, and I will give you happiness and honor; seek to escape, and my lightnings will find you wheresoever you may hide."

"Oh, no! no! no!" cried poor Giles, throwing himself down before the throne. "Great Shepherd of Clouds, do not keep me here. Let me return to my cottage on the plain, to Phyllida who waits for me, and knows not whither I am gone or whether I am living or dead. Oh, let me go, let me go!"

But the Shepherd only shook his head aus-

terely, and rising from his throne, disappeared behind the rose-gray curtains. Again the mountain elves sang, and as they sang, the great hall slowly grew darker than the darkest night, and cold gusts of wind arose wailing in the darkness. Presently Giles felt his body grow weak, strong hands seized him and bore him up, and an instant later a deep sleep blotted out the world.

When he awoke, he found himself in a little room. Dawn was at hand, and the sweet, cold mountain air was blowing through the eastern window. Suddenly, the door swung open, and Eye-o and Ear-o entered.

"The sun is rising, Giles," said Ear-o, "and your appointed task awaits you. The Shepherd wishes the clouds released at once. Hurry, hurry, hurry, Giles, and open their prison-door."

So Giles went forth with the elves. Over the summit of the mountain they ran, along a path which wandered here and there — now

dodging between huge boulders, now skirting terrible precipices. Presently Giles saw a monstrous wall of rock rising before him, in which were fixed two brazen doors taller and more stately than he had ever seen in the world below. Beside these doors, a flight of steps began, which led to the top of the wall.

Curious to see what lay behind the wall and the closed doors, Giles hurried to the top. He found himself standing at the brink of a great bowl, many miles wide and many miles long, hollowed out of the very rock of the mountain-top. Within this bowl, like a giant flock of sheep, lay hundreds of clouds on whose misty tops the rising sun poured gold, pale lavender, and rose. At first, Giles thought them motionless, but as he gazed intently within the bowl, he saw that the clouds moved and swayed much like anchored ships in a tide.

This bowl was the weather-bowl. In it the Shepherd of Clouds prepared the weather for the neighboring countries. One day he would

keep the fair-weather clouds at home and let the rain-clouds sail over the land; on another day, he would keep all the clouds in and let the sun shine; on other days he would mix together such frosts, mists, and snow-flurries as the season required.

Suddenly, ringing infinitely sweet over the mountain-top, rose the clear music of a silver horn.

"It is the Shepherd!" cried Eye-o and Ear-o. "The hour is at hand to send the clouds over the earth. Quick, Giles, unbar the doors!"

So Giles unbound the giant doors, which of their own volition opened wide. A sound as of thunder heard from far away over the sea beat upon Giles's ear as the portals turned upon their hinges. In answer to this sound, the clouds rose and lifted their golden heads, and hastening to the brazen doors, one by one escaped through them to the sunlit spaces of the morning sky. There, they formed themselves into a fleet, and sailed majestically away.

Thus Giles became the servant of the Shepherd of Clouds. It was his task to unbar the door when the Shepherd had prepared the weather; it was his to lock the clouds in, once they had returned from the heavens in answer to the Shepherd's summoning horn. In time he came to know the rain-clouds from their fair-weather brothers; he learned how frosts were sent forth; how fogs were made; and he was even allowed to prepare a small storm. He saw the icy caverns in which the hail-stones lie piled in monstrous bags, the lightning-bolts in their crystal jars, and even the prisoned storm-winds. You may be sure that, when he could so arrange it, Phyllida's garden had quite the finest variety of weather. For Eye-o and Ear-o would tell him about her.

"Tell me, what is Phyllida doing?" Giles would say again and again.

And Eye-o would answer, "She is out in the garden gathering plums"; or, "she is in the kitchen making gingerbread."

And then Giles would say to Ear-o, "Tell me, what is Phyllida saying?"

And Ear-o would answer, "'Oh, would that my lad were home!'"

Two years passed, and Giles, who had found no opportunity of escape, began to lose hope of doing so. Never again, he feared, would he see Phyllida. One day, with Eye-o and Ear-o by his side, he sat on a great boulder and gazed gloomily down on the plain. Spring was just ripening into early summer, the plain was at its very greenest and loveliest, and here and there a little blue wood-smoke hung over the tiny villages. Giles thought of Phyllida far, far away, and a terrible loneliness poured into his heart. Eye-o and Ear-o sitting beside him, their long, strange arms clasped about their knees, looked on with sympathy. Presently Ear-o's right ear turned itself about, and after a moment's silence, the elf said:—

"I hear voices telling of war. I hear the Robber King of the Black Lakes summoning his

terrible army. He is preparing a secret attack on the people of the plain."

"I see him! I see him!" cried Eye-o. "He is talking to the Grand Chamberlain Scelerato."

"Listen," said Ear-o; "he is saying, 'We will sweep the land at dawn, steal the grain, and destroy every village to its foundation.' "

"I see the robbers gathering," said Eye-o. "They are hiding in the dark pine forests, lest they be seen by the people of the plain. The sunlight pierces here and there through the thick branches and shines on the breastplates of the armed men."

At this terrible news, Giles was stricken to the heart with anxiety and fear. What was to become of Phyllida and the people of the plain? If he could only hurry down the mountain and warn them! If he could only escape! And he looked round eagerly, as he had looked a thousand times before, for any avenue of escape; but his gaze met only the great precipices of the mountain and the guarded stairs. What

could he do? His heart became like ice, and he feared to gaze upon the plain lest he see the smoke of burning villages. All night long he never closed his eyes. At dawn he rose and hurried to the top of the gate which overlooked the cloud-bowl. For two whole weeks, not a cloud had been allowed to roam the sky, and it seemed to Giles that the mists were angry, and that a darkness brooded upon them. Turning toward the plain, Giles saw, at the edge of the land, a little glow of fire. The robbers had invaded the plain!

Presently Eye-o came clambering up the steps.

"I see a village in flames," said the elf. "The inhabitants are fleeing down the roads. The news is spreading, and the people of the plain are hurrying to seek refuge in the mountains."

"Oh, where is Phyllida?" cried Giles.

"She is on the highway with Jack and Jill and their children, hastening toward the Valley of Thunder," answered the elf.

Suddenly Giles stood up, and throwing his

arms high over his head, uttered a loud shout. "I can save them," he cried. "Let us send a storm against the robbers. Hurry, let us prepare the worst tempest that ever was seen."

And away he ran to the hail-stone caverns, and carrying bag after bag to the brim, emptied them all into the weather-bowl; he then tossed in a dozen skinsful of the fiercest storm-winds, and ended by casting in all the jars of thunderbolts that were to be found in the cavern. You should have heard the crash of the crystal vases on the rocky floor of the weather-bowl, and the hiss with which the lightning escaped and hid in the rolling edges of the clouds. The great bowl roared and trembled, the clouds massed together and grew dark; lightning played over the black crests of the thunder-heads. From the top of the gate, Giles took one satisfied look into the prisoned tempest, and then hurried down to unbar the door.

Through the gates, like wild herds, poured the clouds, and rising in the air, were caught

by the spreading storm-winds and whirled madly over the sky. The thunder roared as no mortal had ever before heard it or ever will hear it again, and the tempest sailed away to break in all its anger over the heads of the robber army. So terrible was the noise that the enchanted mountain trembled to its very foundations.

Hearing the roar, the Shepherd of Clouds himself was roused and ran down to the cloud-bowl; but so dark was the mountain-top that he lost his way, and narrowly missed falling down a precipice. The mountain elves, terrified by the confusion, ran hither and thither like ants whose nests had been opened. *Crash* went the thunder! *Rumble, rumble, rumble, room, rrrr-rang bang! bang!*

Once he had seen the storm break over the robber army, Giles, taking advantage of the darkness, noise, and confusion, determined to make one more effort to escape. Down the endless stairs he hurried, splashing through the

falling rain, down, and down, and down. Once at the bottom, he was lucky enough to find the path out of the chasm, and hurried along it to the mouth of the Valley of Thunder.

He was free! The terrible storm had spent itself, and the sun was beginning to shine on the thousand rain-drops caught in the matted grass. A rainbow formed just as Giles approached the plain, and the little birds came out to shake the rain from their feathers.

Now, in the secure shelter of an overhanging cliff, were to be found those people of the plain who had fled to the valley for refuge; and when these poor worried folk saw Giles coming down the valley, they recalled the prophecy that a king should come to them out of the valley, and hailed Giles as their king. Best of all, Phyllida herself ran out, and threw her arms about her husband. As for the robbers, the storm had overwhelmed them and swept them all into the river. There, I am glad to say, they turned into little fishes.

When the Shepherd of Clouds found that Giles had escaped after making all this disturbance, he was very angry, and rushed to his lightning closet to hurl some thunderbolts at him. When he got to the closet, however, he found that Giles had used every single bolt, and that the cupboard was empty. Consequently, he had to wait till the end of summer before he could get some new lightning, and by that time, he was so busy arranging the autumn frosts that he quite forgot about Giles.

So Giles and Phyllida became King and Queen of the people of the plain and lived happily ever after.

THE CITY UNDER THE SEA

Once upon a time, in a country of mountains which bordered upon the sea, dwelt a rich merchant who had three sons. The eldest and the second-born were his joy, for they were merchants too, and remained at his side; but the youngest often caused him much anxiety. Not that this youngest son was a wild or a bad

lad; but love of the sea and desire for adventure ran like fire in his veins, and he could not bring himself to sit beside his father and his brothers in the counting-house.

Weary at length of the constant reproaches of his kinsmen, he turned away one night from his father's house and joined a ship as a common sailor. Clad in sailor blue, wearing a little cap, a blouse open at the throat, and trousers cut wide at the bottoms, the runaway lad sailed over the sea to foreign lands and isles. And as the years passed, one by one, and brought no tidings of him, his father and his brothers gave him up for lost.

Now the King of the country in which the rich merchant and his son dwelt loved rare gems and precious stones more than anything else in the world. Hidden secretly away in the deep foundations of his castle lay his treasure-room: it was circular in shape and built of black marble, and at equal distance one from the other, along the curving wall, stood a

hundred statues of armed men, holding ever-burning lights. A hundred coffers of green stone lay on the floor, one at the base of each statue, each coffer piled high with gems.

Night after night, when all was still, the King would descend to the secret chamber, and throwing open the covers of the jewel-chests, would gaze long and silently into the gleaming mass within.

One night the King led his neighbor, the Emperor of the Seven Isles, to the jewel-room, and showed him his treasures.

"Are there fairer jewels to be found in the whole wide world?" said the King proudly.

"They are indeed noble," replied the Emperor, nodding his gray head. "But how happens it that the Emerald of the Sea is not among them? The Emerald of the Sea is the most glorious jewel in the whole wide world. Years ago a fisherman of the Land of the Dawn found it in a strangely carved box which a storm had washed into his nets. I saw it when

I was but a young prince; it hung by a chain from the throat of the Princess of the Dawn, and shone there as if the very secret of the sea were hidden in its heart."

"Where is this emerald to be found?" asked the King, who was consumed with the desire to add the jewel to his possessions. "Tell me, that I may at once send an expedition in search of it."

"I have not heard of it for many a long year," replied the Emperor, "but I think it is still in the Land of the Dawn."

So great was the King's impatience to become the owner of the Emerald of the Sea, that he could scarcely wait for the morning. All night long he slept not a wink for thinking of it, and hardly had the red shield of the morning sun risen above the thin mists lying at the edge of the sea and sky, when he sent for the rich merchant to come to the palace at once.

Wondering much at the summons, the merchant made haste to the palace, and was there

taken instantly before the King. When the King saw him, he said:—

"You are the greatest and richest merchant in my dominions. Know, then, that I have a task worthy of you. In the Land of the Dawn there is a jewel called the Emerald of the Sea; it is your task to discover it and purchase it for me. To possess it, I would give all the gold in my realm. Take heed that you return with it, for if you fail me, my anger shall strike you down."

At these words the merchant bowed low, and replied that he would that very day sail for the Land of the Dawn in his fastest ship. Then, returning home, he gave orders that the best vessel in all his fleets be immediately prepared for the journey; and so swiftly was this done, that the merchant sailed for the Land of the Dawn on the morning tide.

Many days and many leagues he sailed, over shining seas, till he reached the harbor of the Land of the Dawn. Ships were entering and

ships were leaving the lovely mountain-circled bay. How the broad sails tugged at their ropes as a steady wind filled their curving white depths! How silver-clear shone the furrows of foam flowing back from the onward-hurrying bows!

Making her way out toward the great, still mirror of the summer sea, was a strange black vessel, with sails as red as fire.

The merchant anchored his ship in a quiet bay, and hastened ashore to find the Lord Treasurer of the Kingdom. He found this nobleman at ease on a balcony of his castle which overlooked the sea. Upon hearing the merchant's story, the nobleman started with surprise, and said:—

"You are just too late! At the command of my royal master, the Prince of the Land of the Dawn, I sold the Emerald of the Sea only an hour ago to the master of a strange vessel. See, there she is now." And the Lord Treasurer pointed out over the sea to the black ship with

the red sails, which was just then disappearing over the horizon.

Thankful that the other ship was still in sight, the merchant hurried back to his own vessel and gave chase. Luckily for him, there was a full moon that night, by which the shadowy hulk and the swaying masts of the mysterious ship could be seen.

All the next day they sailed, but never an inch nearer to the other vessel did they come, though the merchant loaded his ship with all the canvas she could bear. Another night and another day found them no nearer. Finally, late in the afternoon of the third day, a great storm came sailing over the edge of the sea; a blast of wind struck the merchant's ship, then a torrent of rain, and night came on just as the storm was at its height.

When the daylight came again, the other ship had completely disappeared; and though the worried merchant sailed here and sailed there, never a sign of the stranger could he find. At

last, with a heavy heart, he gave up the quest and returned to his King with the evil tidings.

The King, I hardly need say, was beside himself with rage and disappointment. Scowling so terribly that his eyebrows almost met, he cried to the merchant:—

"Wretch, through you I have lost the finest jewel in the world! If you do not find it within a year, your life and your possessions shall be forfeited to me."

On hearing these terrible words, the merchant turned pale, for he had no more idea where the Emerald of the Sea was to be found than had a new-born child. His two sons, however, when they had heard his story, bade him not to despair, and declared that they would that very night go forth and seek the emerald through the world.

Now, because the poor merchant could not bear to be left quite alone, it was finally agreed that only the eldest son should go in search of the jewel, while the second-born should remain

at home. This, of course, was much against the will of the second son; nevertheless, so it was arranged.

And so the eldest son sailed away. The days lengthened into weeks, the weeks into months, the months into a year, yet the eldest son did not return. A guard of soldiers led the unhappy merchant before the King.

"Well, have you found the Emerald of the Sea?" said the King.

"No," replied the merchant, hopelessly.

And now all would certainly have been over with the poor merchant, had not his second son begged and pleaded with the King for a year of respite in which he, too, might search for the emerald through the world. Though at first unwilling, the King at length yielded to the plea, but exacted one half of the merchant's possessions as a forfeit.

And so the second son sailed away. Days lengthened into weeks, weeks lengthened into months, the months into a year, yet the second

son did not return. Cruel storms wrecked so many of the merchant's ships that he lost the other half of his possessions, and was forced to take refuge in a miserable cottage by the marshes beyond the town.

On the last night of the year granted to him by the King, the unhappy man sat in his poor house by a crumbling driftwood fire, listening to the surf breaking on the beach that edged the marsh. Far away, he heard the bells of the royal city sound the midnight hour. Neither the eldest son nor the second-born had returned. The second year of respite was at an end; nothing now could stay the anger of the King.

Suddenly there came a vigorous rat-tat-tat on the door.

"I am lost," murmured the poor merchant to himself. "The King's soldiers are already at the door." And advancing unsteadily across the room, he threw the door open wide.

A gust of wind from the sea blew in, which

bent back the flame of the taper in his hand, and then across the threshold stepped the youngest son. He was still a sailor and clad in sailor blue, and there was a cutlass in his belt. So shaken with joy was the merchant that for some time he could not utter a word, but merely clung to the strong shoulders of the young seaman.

As for the sailor son, he managed to let his father know that he had returned from distant lands only that very evening, and had just heard of the disasters which had overtaken his family.

As they talked, steps were heard outside; and then, without waiting to knock, a sergeant of the King's guard forced open the door, and, followed by a handful of soldiers, entered the wretched room and took the merchant and his son prisoners. They spent the night on the straw in the royal dungeons, and in the morning were led before the King.

On seeing the merchant, the irate King scowled

more angrily than ever,— for the loss of the Emerald of the Sea had never ceased from troubling him,— and said:—

"Well, have you found the Emerald of the Sea?"

"No," said the poor merchant.

"Summon the executioner!" cried the King.

And now the poor man would certainly have bade farewell to earth, had not the youngest son, like his brothers, interceded with the King.

At first the King would hear not a word of it, and called to his guard to take the prisoners instantly away; but it being whispered that the sailor, although not much more than a lad, had once fought bravely and been sorely wounded in the royal service, he at length gave ear to the youngest son's prayer and said:—

"Yes, you shall have another year. But know that this year shall be the last. If you do not return with the Emerald of the Sea within a twelvemonth, nothing shall save you. I have spoken."

And thus the sailor son went in search of the Emerald. What happened to him upon his search, in what situation he discovered his brothers, and how he visited the City under the Sea, you shall shortly hear.

Now the youngest son had a little boat of his own. It was so small that, when the wind no longer filled its sails, it could be rowed along, and in this boat the sailor lad began his voyage. From harbor to harbor, from nation to nation, he sailed, but never a soul he found who could tell him aught of the strange black ship with the fiery sails or the lost Emerald of the Sea. Even the people of the Land of the Dawn could tell him only that the gem had been sold to an unknown prince.

Presently the winter of the year overtook him, and in one of the sudden storms that heralded

the coming of the cold, his little boat went ashore on a rocky coast, and was soon pounded to pieces by the breakers. Thrown into the sea during the wreck, the sailor was himself so tossed and trampled by the waves that he reached the shore far more dead than alive. Indeed, had it not been for a poor fisherman and his wife, there would have been no more story to tell. These good people, I am glad to say, rescued the sailor from the fury of the waters and nursed him back to health and strength again

When his strength was quite restored, the sailor told this good couple the story of how he had gone forth to seek through the wide world the Emerald of the Sea.

"But my poor lad," said the kind fisherman, "the Emerald of the Sea has vanished forever from mortal eyes."

"What! You know of the emerald?" cried the sailor.

"Alas, yes," replied the fisherman. "Two

years ago the Prince of the Unknown Isles sent the finest vessel in his fleet to the Land of the Dawn to buy the jewel. A beautiful ship was she, with a hull as black as night and sails as red as fire. My brother and I sailed in her crew. The jewel was taken aboard. Our brave ship set sail for the Unknown Isles. Hardly were we three days out of the sight of land, when a storm overtook us and sank the vessel. I chanced to be tossed in the water near a great fragment of the mast, and clung to this until a passing vessel found me. Of all aboard, I alone survived. Forty fathoms deep lies the Emerald of the Sea, never more to be seen but by the dumb creatures of the waters."

At these tidings the brave sailor's heart became like ice; nevertheless, he cried: —

"Alas, good friend, I know that what you say is true, yet shall I not despair; for, come what will, I must save my father!"

Hearing this, the fisherman's wife, a quiet, good body who had had little to say, whispered

that it would be well first to consult the Witch of the Sands.

"The Witch of the Sands? Who is she and where can I find her?" cried the sailor.

"The Witch of the Sands dwells a hundred leagues from here," replied the fisherman's wife. "All the mysteries of the waters are in her keeping and she has an answer for them all. You must go to her and ask her to help you."

So the sailor thanked the good fisherman and his wife, and set out to walk the hundred leagues to the house of the Witch of the Sands. His path lay along a desolate and lonely shore, on whose rocky beaches the wooden bones of old wrecks lay rotting, half buried in stones and weed. Just as the third day's sun was sinking in the shining waters, the sailor arrived at the Witch's dwelling.

The Witch made her home in a deserted old ship, which a storm of long ago had cast far up the sands. As for the Witch herself, she was a woman so old that the sailor thought she surely

must have been living when the moon and the stars were made. A fringe of sea-shells circled the crown of her high hat, and round her wrists were bracelets of pearly periwinkles.

Just as the sailor approached the Witch's door, a young fur seal, who had been basking in a little pool left along the beach by the tide, hastened out of his puddle, and running swiftly toward him on his flappers, nuzzled his hand with his sleek, wet head, just like a young dog.

"Down, Neptune, down!" cried the witch shrilly.

"Good evening, madam," said the sailor in his politest manner.

"You are the third person who has come here to ask me the question you are going to ask," screamed the Witch of the Sands, whose magic powers had revealed to her the reason of the sailor's coming. "I know you! You are the youngest son. Your two brothers have been here to ask me the way under the sea, and I told them; but bless me, they have n't come

back yet. Just like young men to forget an old woman's warning. I 've a good mind not to tell you the way to the under-waters; indeed, I would n't if you were n't a sailor and a child of the sea. Yes, I can show you the road to under the sea; but you must not ask me about the emerald, because I don't know where it is myself. It was in the Land of the Dawn, and that 's the last I heard of it! When you do get to the under-waters, don't forget that. You 'll have to hurry back like the wind, for the year which the King gave your father is almost gone. Don't ask me questions! I know you are going to ask one, because I 'm not a man; and I know what you are going to ask, because I 'm a witch."

And the strange old lady laughed and, putting her hands on her waist, swayed so violently from side to side that the sea-shells on her hat rattled and clicked. Then, after a pause to gather breath, she continued: "Before you can go down into the waters, I shall have to give

you an enchanted ring. Mind you bring it back, for there are only three of them in the whole wide world, and your brothers have the other two. Goodness me, but I don't know why I let them take my magic rings. Now that I come to think of it, I don't know as I *shall* let you take my ring. However, it has been on my mind for some time to tell the King of the City under the Sea that he's been telling the tide to come altogether too near my ship. You can take the ring if you will promise to deliver my message. Promise!"

There was a pause, and the sailor, who had listened to the Witch's every word, solemnly promised to carry her message to the King under the Sea. He was just about to ask a question or two, when the Witch of the Sands, drawing another long, long breath, cried out again:—

"Don't ask questions! I 've told you once and I've told you twice, and I 'll tell you as many times as there are drops of water in the

sea! The path to the City under the Sea begins a hundred leagues to the north; in the high cliffs there, when the tide is low, you 'll find the mouth of a great cave; walk down this cave, and down and down and down, till you feel water rising round your feet. Then put on my ring and walk boldly ahead. In a little while you will see the city shining in the waters. Once there, seek out the King and tell him of your quest. But on no account" (and here the Witch solemnly turned round three times) "eat or drink anything offered to you while you are in the under-waters. If you do, you will forget everything of your past life, your father, your quest, and the Emerald of the Sea. Let one drop pass your lips, and you will spend the rest of your life under the waves. Here is the enchanted ring. Put it in your pocket."

With these words, the Witch took from a little leather purse a simple golden ring and handed it to the youngest son, who put the ring in his pocket, thanked the Witch, and set off for the

cavern which led to the City under the Sea. You may be sure it did not take him very long to find it. After feeling carefully in his pocket to see if the ring was still safe, the sailor plunged on into the winding cave. In a short time, the roar of the breakers on the beach, which had been loud at the mouth of the cavern, began to fade and grow faint, and the tunnel grew dark and cold. Feeling for the wall of the passage with one hand, the youngest son advanced into the blackness. Creatures of the sea, with round shining eyes, stared at him from shallow pools, and now and then his hand, running along the wall, would touch and shake from its place a starfish or great snail.

Down and down and down went the sailor. Presently he heard the lapping of wavelets in the darkness, and a few minutes after, he felt himself advancing into deepening water. Stopping for an instant, he put on the golden ring. Then, walking on again, he felt the water rise from his ankles to his waist, and from his waist

to his throat. One step more, and the water closed over his head.

Once under the waves, the sailor hesitated, uncertain as to which way to turn. Little by little, however, his eyes grew accustomed to the touch of the water, and he saw, lying on the bottom a few feet ahead of him, a small ball glowing with a pale phosphorescent light. Stooping to touch this strange object, the sailor discovered it to be a small round sea-plant which had anchored itself to a stone, and presently he discovered that this light was but one of thousands which together formed a long straight line across the level floor of the sea. Rightly imagining these lights to be signs of a sea-world road, the sailor advanced along them. A slow walk of ten long leagues brought him to the gate of the City under the Sea.

There was very little light there, save for that which came through the waters from the world above, and this was but a faint, pale green glow, which lay, more like a shadow than a light

on the roofs and tower-tops of the submerged town.

The sailor walked unchallenged through the gate, and found himself in the great street of the city. Along the broad avenue grew giant sea-plants with brown leaves, set out in rows like trees; and through the foliage which moved heavily in the currents, little fish darted like birds. Many people walked slowly to and fro — strange people of the sea, all dressed alike in tight-fitting garments of shining, fish-like scales.

The sailor looked into their faces and saw that a broad golden ring encircled the pupils of their eyes. Suddenly two men of the sea, distinguished from the others by swords of red stone, moved through the water, and seizing the sailor in their webbed hands, hurried him before the King of the Under-Waters.

On a coral throne, in a great hall roofed with a high circular dome, sat the King. The flowing waters within were bright, and a queer,

pale green light pierced through the hall from a kind of fountain of light in the centre of the floor under the dome. Approaching this shining fountain, the sailor discovered it to be a mass of glowing sea-creatures, living flowers of the deep, which, even as he looked, stirred their mysterious petals.

"Welcome, Wearer of the Enchanted Ring," said the King, staring hard at the sailor with his large golden eyes. "You come at a fortunate time. This very evening we celebrate the wedding of the second of my three daughters with the mortal wearer of the second ring. Stand you upon the steps of the throne, for they are coming at once. Let the trumpets sound!"

At this command, two youths of the sea lifted huge conch-shells to their mouths and sounded them.

Great doors instantly opened wide, and a gorgeous procession entered. First, appeared a dozen pages; then, in walked the Sea-King's

second daughter, hand in hand with a merry young man, in whom the sailor recognized his second oldest brother.

Presently the conch-shells sounded again.

"The Prince and the Princess!" cried a voice.

The King leaned over from his throne and whispered in the sailor's ear:—

"My eldest daughter and her husband. They were married just a year ago. The Prince is a youth of the world above, and wears the first of the enchanted rings."

Now entered the eldest Princess of the Sea, walking by the side of her husband. And in the husband the young sailor beheld the elder of his two brothers. And though the young sailor stretched out his arms to them, neither of his brothers remembered him, for while faint and hungry, they had forgotten the warning of the Witch of the Sands and had eaten of the bread of the under-world. Thus had the memory of the world above, the lost emerald, and their father's plight faded away.

The conches sounded a third time.

"Come to the wedding banquet," cried the King. "You shall sit beside my youngest daughter."

And now the sailor lad, willy nilly, was hurried into the banquet hall, and seated at the royal table beside the King's youngest daughter. And she was quite the most beautiful of all the three. Noticing that the youngest son touched no food, she said to him:—

"Why do you refuse to taste of the wedding banquet?"

"Princess," replied the sailor, "I have come to the Under-Waters to seek the Emerald of the Sea; for if I return to my own country without it, my father's life will be forfeited. Would you have me forget?"

"But you will never find the Emerald of the Sea!" cried the Princess.

"Never find the Emerald of the Sea! What do you mean?" said the sailor anxiously.

"The Emerald of the Sea has disappeared,"

continued the little Princess, fixing the sailor with her golden eyes. "Years ago it was stolen from my father's treasury by a wicked Prince of the Under-Waters. My father pursued him and overthrew him, but in the struggle the emerald was lost, and rising to the surface, drifted to the shores of the Land of the Dawn. There it remained till the Prince of the Unknown Isles purchased it and took it away in his black ship. This ship, overcome by a storm, sank; but where it lies we know not, though we have searched far and wide through the waters. Whosoever finds it shall be master of the land under the sea, for the emerald is master of us all. My father will not lift a finger to help you find it; indeed, if he knows that you are in search of it, he will force you to eat of the bread of the under-waters. Say nothing, therefore, of your quest."

At these words, the brave sailor's heart sank very low. Mindful of the Witch's warning, he dared touch no morsel of food, yet he knew that

hunger would soon bring weakness in its train. Either he must find the emerald at once, or he must abandon all hope of finding it. He could not live long if he touched no food, and if but one morsel touched his lips he would forget the upper world.

Far away, the poor merchant, whom the King had now cast in prison, watched the days pass one by one, and the last year approach its end. Every morning he would ask for tidings of his sailor son, and ask in vain.

Now, when the wedding banquet was over, and the ball which followed was at its height, the eldest of the princesses called her sister, the bride, aside and said to her:—

"We must rid ourselves at once of this newcomer. Do you not see that he is the younger brother of our husbands? I beheld him stretch out his arms to them as they passed. Who can tell but that he may lead them away from us?

Let us tell our servants to lie in wait for him and deliver us from such a danger."

So said the eldest sister, of the golden eyes. Alas, I fear that the people of the under-waters are sometimes quite as shocking as those of the world above.

Later that evening, just as the poor sailor was standing by one of the great doors, a dozen or so stout rogues in the service of the eldest sister fell upon him, bound him with cords, and dragged him through the water to the royal stables.

Now the people of the under-waters, having no horses,—for sea horses are but tiny creatures,—had tamed great dolphins to carry them about. A hundred of these monsters, each with a bronze ring in his nose, were ranged along the sides of the stables, and on the fiercest and angriest of them all, the Princess's servants tied the sailor. How the great fish, fastened to a bar by a chain and his nose-ring, pulled, rolled, swerved aside, and thrashed his tail!

But all his twistings were of no avail, for the poor sailor lad was soon fastened to his back with a rope of seaweed. Then the creature was released from his chain, given a blow on the side with a whip of shark-skin, and turned into the wilds of the under-waters.

For half an hour, the fish, frightened at his burden, fled at lightning speed over the roofs of the city, and sped on into the lonely plain. Then, ceasing his mad flight, he tried again to shake himself free of the sailor. He turned, he leaped, he dived, but all in vain, for the sailor was securely fastened to his back. Terrified anew, with a swift motion of his great fins, he shot violently to one side and rushed on and on into the dark. All that long night he fled. Toward the morning of the next day, however, the sailor managed to work one arm free, and draw the cutlass from his waist. With this he made short work of his bonds and rolled off the fish's back. The great animal, delivered of the weight which had lain upon it, rose on the tip

of its tail and shot madly toward the surface, and the sailor tumbled through the waters to the bottom.

Weak and hungry, the poor young seaman gazed about in the half-gloom, and found himself on the lower slopes of a sunken mountain rising from the ocean floor. In no direction could he find a sign of the City under the Sea. Hoping, however, to see better from the mountain's top, he decided to climb it. Strange plants and shells lay in the crevices of the weedy rocks, schools of bright fish fled past him like living arrows, and huge crabs scuttled away as he appeared. Suddenly, lying on her side in a little ravine of the mountain, he saw a ship — the black ship of the Emerald of the Sea! Weary and weak though he was, it took the sailor but a moment to clamber aboard, and hurry past the broken masts into the captain's cabin. A steady, green radiance shone in one corner of the weedy room, and hastening toward it, the sailor found, at last, the Emerald

of the Sea. The box which had enclosed it had rotted away and fallen apart.

"Victory!" cried the sailor, "victory! The emerald is mine at last, and I shall save my father."

He took the great jewel from the broken box and rested it in the cup of his two hands. How it glowed on the pale flesh! Then, thrusting it into a pocket and holding onto it with one hand, he hurried out again to the mountain-side.

In the world above, it was high noon, and the level rays of the sun beat deep into the green waters. So bright had the slope become, that the sailor lad felt sure that he could not be far from the surface of the waves. Moreover, if the mountain-top rose above the waters, it would form an island in the upper world. And so, indeed, it was. Climbing on toward the top of the mountain, the sailor first scaled a steep cliff, and at the top of this he found a gentle slope of sand. The sun's rays now illumined

the water so brightly that the air seemed only a little distance away. Presently a beach-crab ran nimbly away from beneath the sailor's feet. The water grew very much warmer. The shore was at hand! A few steps more, and the youngest son emerged on the beach of a beautiful isle.

Half-blinded by the sun, he walked toward the dry land. There he found some delicious fruits growing, and a rippling brook of crystal water. He ate and drank, and his strength returned.

Himself again, the sailor took the Emerald of the Sea in his hands, and cried,—

"By the power of the Emerald of the Sea, I summon here the two elder princesses of the under-waters, and my two brothers, their husbands!"

There was a sound of far thunder under the clear blue sky, and a moment later, four heads rose out of the waters, and shaking the salt spray from their eyes, the princesses and the brothers walked through the shallows to where

the sailor was standing. Now, the princesses were very much frightened when they beheld the sailor holding the all-powerful emerald, and falling on their knees before him, begged him to forgive their misdeeds, and not to take away their loved ones. Tears fell from their golden eyes, and mingled with the drops of the salt ocean still coursing down their black scales. As for the brothers, they would have hurled themselves upon the sailor, had not the magic force of the emerald prevented their approach.

"Be merciful and forgive," said the younger of the sisters. "After all, had we not caused you to be spirited away, you never would have found the emerald."

"Yes, that is true," said the sailor. "My brothers shall decide for themselves. Break, then, the spell which binds them to the under-waters, restore to them their memory of the past, and if then they choose to remain, I shall not try to lead them away. Reverse the spell!"

"That is easily done," said the elder sister.

"Let them but touch the food or drink of the upper world and their memory will return."

And in less time than it takes to tell it, the sisters offered the enchanted brothers water from the rivulet. When they had drunk of it, both the brothers became pale as death, their eyes opened wide, and they stared as strangely as men suddenly waked from sleep. Then, seeing their younger brother, they ran to him and threw their arms about him, and asked a thousand questions about their father and the quest of the emerald.

The golden-eyed brides watched them with sad faces, and finally broke into quiet tears. Imagine their joy, when their husbands returned to them and bade them be of good cheer.

Thus was true love found to be mightier than the mightiest spell.

Now, when the princesses of the sea had dried their tears, the sailor and his brothers took counsel as to how the Emerald of the Sea might be brought to the King in time to save their

father's life. You may judge of the sailor's horror when he discovered that because of a bad error in the calendars and clocks of Sixes and Sevens (a city he had visited in his search for the emerald), the life of his father had been forfeited to the King three days before!

But now we must return to the poor merchant himself.

All the third year the poor man had lain in a small cell in the royal dungeons, waiting anxiously, oh, so anxiously, to hear the quick step of the sailor son on the winding stairs just outside his prison door. But the year came to an end, as you know, without his return. For the third and last time, the castle guards led the poor man before the King. Now the King had never forgiven the merchant for the loss of the jewel; his chagrin, indeed, had increased with the years, and he was very glad that he could at last take his revenge.

"Have you found the Emerald of the Sea?"

said the King, harshly. He stood erect on the steps of his judgment-seat, arms folded, eyes fixed in a fierce, black frown.

"No," said the merchant quietly.

"Then you shall seek for it yourself," cried the King. And he gave orders that the merchant be tied hand and foot, and tossed into a little boat without food or drink, and then sent adrift to die helplessly in the lonely seas. And so this awful sentence was carried out.

Bound hand and foot, scarce able to roll from side to side, the merchant lay motionless in his little craft and stared up at the blue sky. Presently a merciful sleep overcame him, and while he slept, a wind arose which swept the little boat along with it.

Meanwhile, on the beautiful island, the sailor and his companions, stunned at their discovery, began preparations to return to the underwaters. Just as the twilight fell, all walked together to the margin of the darkening sea, and advanced into the waves.

Suddenly, the sailor, whose eyes were the keenest, saw a little boat rapidly drifting ashore. Now caught in a current of the shallow beach, it drifted sideways; now propelled by the rising tide, it floated on, bow pointed to the shore. The sailor hurried toward it and seized it. Suddenly he uttered a ringing cry! The old merchant lay on the floor of the boat. He still lived, for they could see him gently breathing. Lifting him up tenderly, the three sons carried him to the shore, unloosed his bonds, and brought him back to life.

Now when the merchant was himself again, the sailor, through the power of the emerald, caused the waves to carry a great ship to the island, and on this ship the three sons, the two princesses, and the old merchant returned to the merchant's country. All landed secretly, however, for they knew that the angry King would seize them if he knew of their return. And so it came to pass that, one night, shortly after the homecoming, word was brought to the

sailor that the King had heard of the merchant's escape and was sending guards to arrest the merchant and his companions.

It was almost midnight when the sailor lad received the warning. Taking the emerald with him, he advanced to a window by the ocean, and cried out over the moonlit waters,—

"Waters of the Sea, rise and overwhelm the palace of the King!

Now the King's palace stood apart by itself on a tongue of land running far out into the tide, and soon the rising waters were flowing over the marble floors and pouring in through the windows. One by one, the lights in the thousand rooms, touched by the waves, hissed, sputtered, and expired. The servants of the palace, one and all, ran away pell-mell, and left the dark castle to its fate. Little by little the advancing water crept from the walls to the balconies, from the balconies to the towers, and from the foot of the towers to their very tops. Finally, all the moon could see as it

shone upon the flood was the weather-vane of the highest turret of all. You should have seen the little waves ripple and break about it! And finally, even the weather-vane disappeared under the black waves.

Locked in his secret treasure-room, opening the jewel coffers one after the other, the King remained quite ignorant of the disaster. For some time no sound reached him in his hidden retreat, because the door of the treasure-room was very thick and strong. Suddenly he heard behind him the sound of falling water, and turning toward the door, beheld streams of water gushing through the passages between the door and its frame. Horror-struck, he watched the door burst from its locks and hinges; a roaring cascade of cold sea-water came pouring into the room, and a moment later the whole castle crumbled and fell to pieces.

Now, when the King had met his deserts, the people of the country, who greatly respected

the merchant, offered him the crown; but he refused it and conferred it on his two elder sons. Thus it came to pass that the country had two kings. Each brother in turn reigned for six months of every year, and spent the other six under the sea with the golden-eyed people of the waters.

As for the sailor lad, he sailed the sea for many years, and finally married a pretty niece of the Witch of the Sands. Then, like all sailors, he went to the country to live. His house is built of gray stone, ivy climbs over it, and apple orchards lie beneath its windows.

And they all lived happily ever after.

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